new masses

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Georgia: New Wind A-Blowing

A REPORT FROM ATLANTA — **by Virginia Gardner**

Paris: THE CULTURAL SCENE — by Claude Morgan

China: AFTER THE MARSHALL MISSION — by F. V. Field

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just a minute

As THE packed meeting NEW MASSES arranged for J. B. S. Haldane was about to open, it suddenly struck us that for some reason the American publication we usually associate with his name is the progressive quarterly, *Science and Society*. We tried to figure out why since actually Professor Haldane has not written for *Science and Society* very often. (How often? We called up the *S & S* office the next day and were told he had appeared four times since the magazine was founded in 1936.) Perhaps it is because Haldane combines preeminent scientific achievement with social understanding and a social conscience that he is linked in our mind peculiarly with *Science and Society*. (Of course, we of NM too are proud to claim him as contributor and friend.) Somehow what Haldane stands for as scientist and as citizen is the sort of thing *S & S* has aimed at—though not even its editors would claim to have always hit the mark.

All of which helps to remind us that in the past year *Science and Society* completed its first ten years and is now embarked on its second decade. During this period it has cut out a special place for itself as a magazine in which Marxist and non-Marxist scholars collaborate in illuminating various fields of the natural and social sciences, of philosophy, history and literature. Just a moment ago Maureen, our editorial secretary, popped through the door with the information that the 1946 Pacific History Award of the Pacific Coast Section of the American Historical Association has been given to Harlan R. Crippen of the University of California for his article, "Philippine Agrarian Unrest: Historical Backgrounds," in the last issue of *Science and Society*. This is an example of the sort of work this magazine presents in each issue, work contributed by some of the best minds in America and other countries.

Loving our friends doesn't of course mean being blind to their faults. Certainly we of NEW MASSES know the many headaches and heartaches that afflict cooperative, non-profit magazines such as NM and *S & S* and cause the best-laid editorial plans to gang a-gley. But it certainly will not strain the friendship between us to say that *Science and Society* does, after all, have a few things wrong with it. (We're not perfect ourselves!) We find ourselves puzzled by occasional *S & S* articles which seem intended to be Marxist but in which Marxist principles are blunted and blurred. We feel too the magazine sometimes errs on the side of academicism, as distinguished from scholarship, that it does not sufficiently reflect the social and ideological struggles that swirl about us, that it ought to be more combative, more challenging to capitalist ideas than it is.

But whatever its weaknesses, *Science and Society* is making a contribution to American progressive thought that is rich and unique. Our congratulations to the editorial board, headed by the indefatigable Prof. Bernhard J. Stern. And more power to *S & S* during the next decade.

GOOD Marxist economists who are also good writers are scarce. In fact, a writer on economic subjects has to be very good in order to hold his reader with him. You who have been reading NM in recent weeks know we've found such a man. His name is Ralph J. Peters and he has an important piece in this issue. The comments that have come to us show that his recent articles diagnosing the ills of the capitalist economy have clicked with our readers. Our Washington editor, Virginia Gardner, writes that his pieces are "very much appreciated here in labor circles."

With America now moving through boom to bust it is more important than ever to fathom the complexities of the capitalist economic system on which the whole superstructure of social, political and intellectual life rests. We are therefore happy to announce that with this issue Mr. Peters is joining our editorial board and will contribute regularly his searching economic analyses written in layman's language.

A. B. M.

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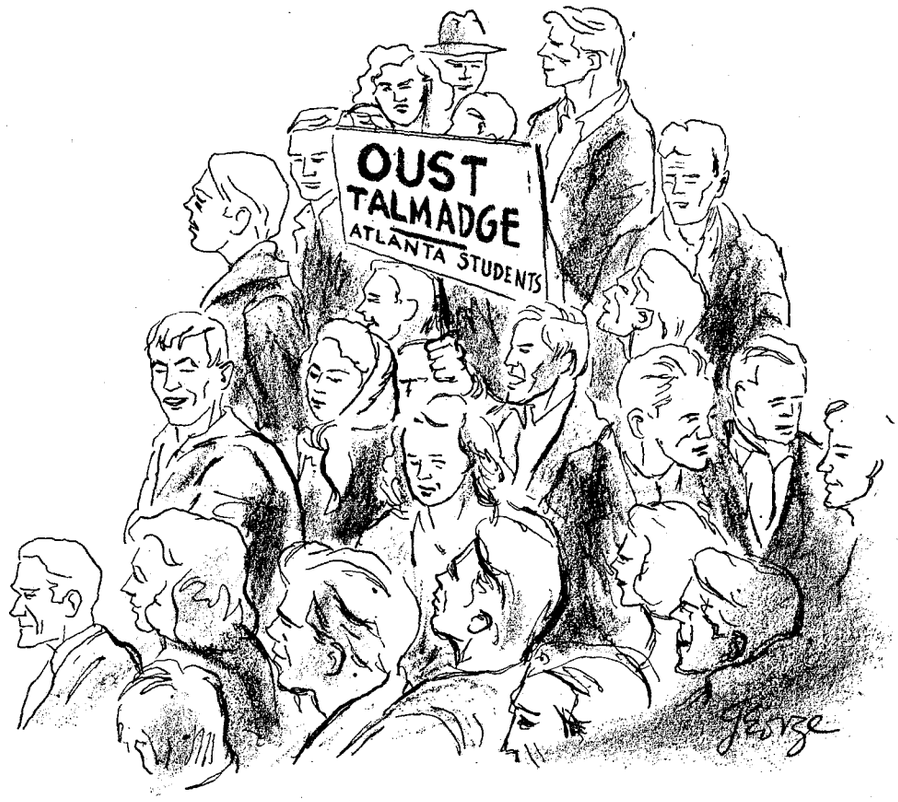

GEORGIA: NEW WIND A-BLOWING

Beneath the surface of the anti-Talmadge struggle is the stirring of a new South.

By VIRGINIA GARDNER

Atlanta, Ga.

IN THREE days in Atlanta you bump into the most amazing things which are right on the surface, thrown there by the big wind which has been unloosed in Georgia. Graying matrons in well-tailored tweeds interrupt with hoarse shouts a veteran trying to put a motion to modify a resolution at an anti-Talmadge mass meeting. A Talmadge supporter in a fur coat and formidable hat shouts back, "And these are the silk-stockings talking. Let him speak!" A bishop ineffectually calls for order. Boos and hisses and shouts fill the air.

"Isn't it disgusting?" a girl reporter at the press table says.

"I think it's wonderful," a gray-haired male reporter replies. He is not being funny.

Students, 2,500 of them, many of them self-conscious at their first taste of collective action, march soberly in perfect order through the streets. "I'm afraid we're making a public spectacle," one girl worries. "Hush—it's the most important thing you've ever done," her friend replies. From eight colleges they come, demanding that Herman Talmadge, son of the late unlamented Gene, end his usurpation of the governorship. They add point to their demonstration by hanging an effigy of Talmadge with a swastika on his sleeve to the statue of old Tom Watson, hate-monger of a former day.

Everyone talks, and about only one subject. In communities all over the state anti-Talmadge meetings are being held and chapters of the Aroused Citizens of Georgia are being organized. It is a clean, strong anger that the protesting veterans and students, the businessmen, the housewives, the club ladies, the petition-signing ministers and others are expressing.

The politicians want to talk, too. Once in a while they remember you are a reporter, like the young legislator who was so anxious to justify his vote for Herman Talmadge that he said, "Why, I used to be an Arnall man. I even threw the Klan of Porterville to Arnall in 1942. I'm not a Klan member," he said hastily, "and I wouldn't want to be quoted on this. But I know those boys. I just told them, this guy is regular, and they

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voted for Arnall, and it carried that county for him. Those boys wanted to murder me when Arnall turned out like he did. But I said I didn't know—I honestly didn't know."

What he meant by Arnall's having "turned out like he did," I found, was his urging that Georgia follow the ruling of the Supreme Court and abolish the white primary.

There is no doubt that at this writing, as Acting Governor M. E. Thompson said, a "recession" is under way in the Talmadge fortunes. This was indicated in two developments in the state legislature—the same legislature that had elected Talmadge "governor." The House refused to be pressured into voting the Talmadge-backed white primary bill and instead postponed consideration of the measure from Wednesday till Monday. In the Senate efforts of the Talmadge forces to expunge from the record Thompson's oath as acting governor were stopped by a tie vote which was broken by the president pro-tem in favor of Thompson.

You get the sense that this is a revolt against much more than appears on the surface, that it is a protest against the race-inciting statements of Talmadge and his supporters, as well as against his strong-arm attempt to steal the governorship. True, many in the anti-Talmadge camp still believe in the white primary and the hateful discrimination it implies. There are also certain liberals who would like to soft-pedal this issue. Thompson himself is only nominally a progressive leader and has vacillated from liberalism to taking the advice of the notorious ex-governor and white supremacist, E. D. Rivers. Yet there is a growing awareness that the Negroes—and large numbers of poor whites—can't forever be kept in bondage and that Talmadge stands for the worst in the way of Hitler-like oppression.

Take Mrs. J. A. Campbell, for example. I heard Mrs. Campbell's voice raised in a passionate denunciation before I saw her, and I heard from the six hundred persons packed in the Courthouse at Decatur cheers and thundering applause, with a few boos from Talmadgeites. I was wedged close to the door, my press card unavailing, when the reverberations of her powerful voice came flooding out to us. Mrs. Campbell had been taking young Rep. Pierre Howard apart. He had risen to defend his vote for Talmadge, saying he didn't want to do it but had to keep his oath to abide by the state constitution. Most legislators who voted for Herman came from rural areas where the native farm population, impressed with Ol' Gene's anti-corporation speechmaking that he reserved for rural use, had supported him. But here young Howard from populous DeKalb county, who had strongly backed the elder Talmadge's primary opponent, progressive James Carmichael, had defied his constituents and voted for Herman.

Later I talked to Mrs. Campbell and her food-broker husband, "for forty years in business in Atlanta." She told me she had never taken any part in politics or public life. Then I asked her about the white primary. "I think the Negroes will have their political rights," she said. "It will come, with other progress." Her husband agreed. "They're citizens, and they should vote."

ONE of the contradictions of the current scene not unusual in the South, but exaggerated here because of the strength of the rural areas under the county unit system, lies in the character of the support for Talmadge. The late Gene and the crown prince Herman, who traveled with his father, are more or less idols with many honest farmers, themselves poor, who responded to the Talmadge oratory leveled against the corporations. These are the legitimate wool-hat boys, so called because they wear wide-brimmed wool hats summer and winter. With the agricultural workers of Georgia unorganized, underpaid, even today getting a top wage of $15 a week, masses of them lined up at the polls and voted for Gene. Yet the Georgia Power & Light Co., the Trust Co. of Georgia and other corporations have stood protectively behind the Talmadges. The interests of the open-shop manufacturers are directly involved. "Eighty-five percent of the really rich people were for Talmadge this time," Rep. Pierre Howard told me. In challenging the Talmadge reign the independent businessmen prominent in the progressive camp are challenging in fact entrenched monopolies, with all their Wall Street ties. This battle requires that they ally themselves with organized labor, which many of them fear mightily.

Most glaring example is the case of the railroads, which have got away with murder in this state. Two railroad cases are pending in the Supreme Court, one involving freight rates and the Southern Railway, the other millions of dollars in taxes the state is trying to collect. I cannot verify reports that the railroads contributed to the Talmadge campaign and that the elder Talmadge in turn promised to drop legal action against them. But I do know that the men responsible for the case, which may enable the state to collect taxes from six railroads for the first time, are apprehensive of the outcome if the courts should rule that Talmadge is the rightful governor of Georgia. Att'y Gen. Eugene Cook, who recognized M. E. Thompson as acting governor and is asking a declaratory judgment in the courts on Talmadge's status, announced that so long as he is in office he will prosecute the railroad suits, as well as the suits to dissolve the Ku Klux Klan and the fascist Columbians, Inc. (According to law the Fulton County Superior Court, in which the declaratory judgment is sought, cannot hear it before February 7.)

THE chief strategist of the Talmadge forces and the man who has been a power in Georgia politics for years is Roy Harris, former speaker of the House, who was defeated in the last election. Although not even a member, Harris has been freely coming onto the floor to direct the wool-hat boys on strategy, has sat in on committee meetings and given them the line.

I found the roly-poly, apple-cheeked Mr. Harris eating lunch in the noisy restaurant in the Capitol, in which he was joined by Sen. A. H. S. Weaver. He readily consented to an interview with NEW MASSES, asked me to pull up a chair. Later a Hearst reporter came up and joined us. Harris appeared to enjoy it all. It seemed impossible to offend him.

"I started this white primary move myself," he boasted. A leader in the House under four governors, he now reminded me that he had been loyal to Arnall when he was governor until 1945, when Arnall advocated Negro voting (after the Supreme Court ruling). "He wanted to be Vice President on the 1948 ticket and he knew the only way he could get it was to get the Negroes and the CIO. I wouldn't go along," he said. Therefore "I took over myself the responsibility of writing the rules of the convention in Macon last October." Yes, he repeated, his sharp blue eyes twin-

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kling behind his rimless glasses, "I took them over myself."

"Is it true you plan to repeal all control of the state over the primaries, and then if the Supreme Court holds an unregulated primary invalid, change the regulations by a comma, and repeat this so long as the Court rules against you?" I asked.

"I never heard of it, but it's a good plan. It's true, it could be done," he said merrily. Then, his eyes narrowing, he said: "Georgia will do whatever is necessary to keep this state a white man's state."

The Hearst reporter earnestly asked if he was for educating Negroes. Oh, yes, give them schools. "Schools of their own, though?" I queried.

"If you're from the South," he said, leering unpleasantly, "I don't have to tell you what happens when you let 'em go to school with whites."

"What happens?" I asked.

"Whenever you destroy segregation you've got civil war," he said.

He pretended to be unconcerned about the movement, up to now spoken of only in private, to form a second party if the white primary bill is passed. "It won't hurt us if they come out in the open," he said. "Let the Negroes have their party. The whites wouldn't join them. It would ruin their businesses," he said, ignoring the existence of workers as the politicians now are able to do because of the level of labor's political activity. "We've got enough scalawag white people in the state who'll form with the Negroes so it will be hard to whip 'em, but it won't if they're in the open," he said.

The gubernatorial issue "won't ever get to the courts," he said arrogantly, and "the courts have got nothing to do with it. This'll let up—as soon as they quit taking up collections from the Negro associations up North. A lot of it's coming from the Reds and pinks, too."

"Is it true that the Klan works with the Talmadge forces through you, that you are the one they speak through?" I asked.

He was urbane. "It wasn't till all this fight was started on the Ku Klux Klan by Ellis Arnall and Walter Winchell that there was much Klan here," he said. "There was just three little bitty Klans, in East Point, Decatur and Porterville. Just a handful. Then Governor Arnall commenced to trade with the Negroes and the CIO to get their support and he give 'em enough publicity to get some members."

"Do you consider the Klan a menace?" asked the other reporter.

"Hell, they ain't enough of 'em to be a menace," said the jolly man. "I don't know what the idea of the Klan is. They got one thing I'm for, though —the white primary."

"Did you have a conference with the head of the Klan last October?" I asked.

"No," he said. "I know Dr. Sam Green [KKK head, now laid up from an accident and unavailable to the

Eugene Karlin.

HARLAN COUNTY, A DECADE AGO

by Paul B. Newman

The miners then broke bread and salt in craft,
Cool corridors and caves and tasted earth,
Such season whet the dust of coal since birth
And breasts' sweet suck had willed them to this shaft.
Their calculation went its golden round
Of sun and son and woman in bright day
And bright as plows that split the sandy clay
Was steel to hand their harvest from the ground.
So women in the sun, their sons in birth
Meant comradeship as close as silence, shared
Significance with crusts and hands that pared
An apple as the moving steel plows earth,
And skies that drove tall mules to race the rain
Swept plowmen down to break the earth again.

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press], of course, but I haven't seen him in years. Oh, I've spoken to members of the Klan in hotel lobbies, but I haven't talked to them as members of the Klan," he said carelessly.

I asked him if he were anti-Semitic, too. There weren't many Jews in Georgia, he replied, evading the question, "and ours are with us in Savannah and Augusta."

Harris' analysis of the vote for Ol' Gene Talmadge, for whom he managed three or four campaigns through the years (although he turned against him and went with Rivers and Arnall in 1936 and 1940), is that this time he had sections of the middle class with him more than before, shown by 100,000 votes more than he ever got in his other campaigns, he said.

"He has always had the Georgia Power & Light and many big corporations with him, hasn't he?" I asked.

"He didn't have the big corporations this time," he said blandly. "He has had a lot before, but if they were with us this time, it wasn't loud enough to hear. Of course under the law they are not allowed to make contributions, so all we know is through their officials," he said serenely. "We didn't have a single big contribution this time. The townfolk is for the n——s votin', you see."

He said cheerfully that it was "the n——s votin'" that defeated him and his Cracker Party in his own county. "There's not any CIO in my town," he gloated. "They can't organize without the n——s in Georgia, and so they've gone out for complete social equality, but in Georgia, if we have n——s workin' in one plant, we don't have whites." This is not true. In steel, auto, packinghouse, textile, stone quarry and woolen mills, Negro and white work together, are organized together in the CIO and attend joint meetings without any segregation. But textile workers are largely white, as the employers have kept Negroes out.

Asked about his own relation to the corporations, Harris said, "My clients are the folks with money." But he denied he had the big corporations, "except on special occasions when they get in a tangle; they only call me in on special cases." He admitted he had represented the Power & Light Co.

HARRIS, who has been with one faction and another in Georgia politics since 1921, takes as a matter of course the happy working relationship between the AFL hierarchy in Georgia and the manufacturers. He explained casually that he and Senator Weaver and the AFL representative in the House, Cicero Kendrick, who also voted for the Talmadge "election," always got together with industry representatives and worked out legislation. In this way, he said, they had kept out many anti-labor bills, "but this year it may be different." He thought a version of the Christian-American-Sen. W. Lee (Pappy) O'Daniel bill might pass as it did in the Arkansas and other legislatures two years ago. Senator Weaver, he explained, was from Bibb County, home of the chain of cotton textile mills which form the Bibb County Manufacturing Co. "His brother is with the company, and I guess you represent them, don't you?" he asked the Senator casually. Such things are not even politely glazed over, but right out in the open in Georgia's open-shop empire. The Bibb County company and the cotton textile mills in Harris' Richmond County are all open shop.

I encountered Mr. Harris once again, immediately after the joint session of the legislature heard Talmadge's speech and his last-minute addition to it—a reply to Thompson's challenge earlier in the day to let the people decide who was governor in a special election. Talmadge offered to resign—if Thompson simultaneously resigned from the lieutenant governorship, to which he was, of course, duly elected. He offered to resign then only if and when the legislature had completed its duties, including the passage of the so-called white primary bill, and he agreed only if they were to compete in a white primary under the county unit system—when the complete control of it would be under his hand-picked Democratic committee.

In the same speech Herman Talmadge, who seized office through gang pressure and brute force and held it surrounded by state troopers fully armed and clad in dazzlingly new gray uniforms, claimed that his opponents were "advocating anarchy." Then, his nasal, ordinarily high-pitched voice swelling in volume, his lock of black hair hanging over his forehead, his pose studied as the newsreels went into action, he declaimed: "If they persist in their effort, I shall call for the white people of Georgia to come to Atlanta and show them a real demonstration."

It was immediately after the speech that Harris, bubbling with spirits, espied me, interviewing his associate Rep. Kendrick. "Well," he said, "We showed 'em, didn't we? We told 'em to put up or shut up." But it was the next day that Mr. Harris' predictions that the white primary bill would pass the House with an overwhelming majority on Wednesday proved a bust. Mr. Harris was slipping, along with Herman.

THE drive of Georgia's reactionaries to keep Negroes from voting has produced a massive bill which invalidates all previous legislation concerning primary elections, gives the entire conduct of the primaries over to the Democratic Party and in effect turns the running of the Democratic Party and the primary completely over to a hand-picked committee. If it is passed, a poll-tax of $50 or whatever amount is wanted by the clique then in power can be instituted. The secrecy of the ballot is left without any guarantees. Not only would the 140,000 Negroes who cast votes for Carmichael be left without any protection of their rights, but the entire voting population would be at the mercy of the hand-picked state executive committee of the Democratic Party. The purpose is to get around the Supreme Court ruling in the Texas white primary case by changing the primary from a state-regulated function to a purely private one.

One of the anti-Talmadge legislators, Myer Goldberg of Coweta, told reporters that if the bill passed, another party would be formed. Another state committee would come forward and a separate primary might be held. "That would be the end of the white primary and the county unit system in the primary," he said.

While the CIO is on record against the white primary and the county unit system, many of its own members do not know it, and the mass of unorganized white mill workers and agricultural workers are without political guidance. The kind of leadership represented by Ken Dowdy, David Dubinsky follower, who, despite the CIO concentration on the textile industry, has succeeded in organizing only twenty percent of the workers, is one of the factors that prevents labor from playing an effective political role. However, with all its weaknesses, the battle against the Talmadge coup, closely linked as it is with the fight against the white primary, is a sign that the forces of the new progressive South are growing. They'll win in the end.

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PARIS LETTER

by Claude Morgan

Claude Morgan, editor of "Les Lettres Francaises," the leading French cultural journal, is a distinguished novelist, critic and political commentator. His latest novels, both completed since the war's end, are "Le Marque de L'Homme" and "Le Poids du Monde."

A member of the Communist Party of France, Morgan was one of the leading figures of the Resistance. He completed the project for founding "Les Lettres Francaises" during the Nazi occupation after Jacques Decour-Dimanche, the brilliant young Communist leader who had initiated this work, had been shot by the Germans.

We are happy to announce that Claude Morgan will write a regular monthly Paris letter for NEW MASSES.

PARIS this winter season has largely recovered its former appearance, its intense life and animation. Taxis jam the public squares; there are long lines in front of the big movie-houses on the Boulevards and the Champs-Elysees. But at night the electric signs are not always lit. Our city lacks the bright lights, the scintillating displays of those pre-1939 nights—for more than seven years now we have been without them. In the cafes there is no real coffee with crisp *croissants*. And the number of apartments without heat remains the same.

Yet intellectual life has resumed to the full. Existentialism is hardly ever spoken of any more. For a year it has been forgotten; it is old hat now. Of it there remains—and that is the crux of it—only the talent of Jean-Paul Sartre.

Moreover, you would be very hard put to find many intellectuals capable of giving you a definition of what existentialist philosophy really is. Who knows Heidegger? How many have read Sartre's *L'Etre et Le Neant* (Being and Nothingness)? But on the other hand, numerous young people know the parable of the man and the pea: "Take a green pea. Like everything else it has an essence and an existence. Its essence precedes its existence. But if you consider a man (moral man), his existence, on the other hand, precedes his essence. In other words, man's essence is not determined in advance; man is formed through contact with the real, in his struggle against the real. He is free in his becoming." A number of young intellectuals were enthusiastic for a season about these first truths on which so many philosophies have been based. But today people don't even talk about them any more. Yet it is impossible to go abroad without having to explain them at great length. On a lecture tour which took me to Belgium, Holland, Czechoslovakia and even Bulgaria, I asked myself as I surveyed my audience, who would pose the fatal question: "What is existentialism?" And there was always someone in the hall who did.

In Paris today we have other fish to fry. The season from October to January has been unusually rich in lectures: the *Ambassadeurs* series which, under Andre David's management, has recovered its pre-war prestige; those at the Sorbonne organized under the auspices of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization); and many others. The question of the future of man has been vigorously debated in these lectures—for that, whether explicitly or not, has been the theme of all our controversies. This winter Paris has been impassioned as never before.

At the Sorbonne, Andre Malraux publicly adopted an anti-progressive stand. He asserted: "*Students, it does not matter in the least for any one of you whether you are Communist, anti-Communist, liberal, or no matter what* [fascist too, therefore!]: *for the only real problem is to know how, above these structures, and in what form, we can recreate man.*" And who, pray, is this abstract man, this ectoplasm soaring above ideas, cultures and philosophies?

The best representatives of the progressive forces in France answered him in the press and at public lectures. Louis Aragon, also speaking at the Sorbonne, replied to

"New Europe," lithograph by Eugene Karlin.

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him. And then it was clear who are today the supporters of the man who wrote *Man's Hope*. For with intermingled cries of: *Long live Malraux!* and *Long live Maurras!* the reactionary group of student youth tried to heckle Aragon. The latter exclaimed:

"How are we going to recreate man? Or is man dead? Those are not real problems, they are attempts to dodge reality. Away with these metaphysical capers! In the bitter struggle involving men's freedom, dignity and life against the fascist brutes—yes, for one moment on the edge of the abyss we could ask ourselves grimly: is man going to die? *But the reply came the very next moment! It was given not by a few men, not by a handful of problem-jugglers, but by hundreds of thousands of heroes at the price of their blood.*"

And this new man arose from the depths of our people, in the midst of tragedy and struggle. With what was he imbued? Not with lust for power, pride of race, or the fanaticism of the conqueror, but solely with absolute devotion to the cause of happiness for his fellow-men. This new man is still with us: every appeal to the people shows that his power is growing and extending.

There have been other intellectual battles in the press between writers of the anti-Soviet Right who applauded Arthur Koestler's books and those who, like Georges Mounin in *Les Lettres Francaises*, sought to expose the hollowness of Koestler's methods. The latter possesses the talent of indicating all probabilities, *except the only one that matters*, and his novels exemplify the fine art of cheating.

Among Communist writers a very lively debate has proceeded on the theme: Is there a Communist esthetic? The thing began in connection with abstract painting but it quickly went beyond that framework and has aroused heated comments. It provided quite a dilemma for newspaper editors, because with every mail they received three or four passionate articles, pro or con, on this subject.

THE literary prizes at the end of the year revealed no outstanding new talents. The Goncourt prize was particularly unfortunate. It was given to *Histoire d'un Fait Divers*, by Jean Jacques Gauthier, a very mediocre book written in a false and tear-jerking naturalist manner. So bad is the situation that a group of young writers has just been formed, not to give a new prize in addition to the Goncourt, the Femina, the Renaudot and the Interallie prizes (the list seems to go on and on!), but to pick out the jury that made the worst choice. Thus the judges in their turn will be judged. . . . We needed a little humor. For humor is what is most lacking in French life today. But that too will return.

The theatrical hit of the season is Armand Salacrou's new play *Les Nuits de la Colere* (Nights of Wrath), produced at the Marigny Theater, on the Champs-Elysees, by Jean-Louis Barrault. The two ex-Comedie Francaise stars, Barrault and Madeleine Renaud, have made the Marigny Theater very fashionable. At the moment it is giving plays that are different, more striking than those presented at our old national theater. Salacrou's piece is a drama of the Resistance movement. "Oh, another Resistance play!" those who have an *a priori* suspicion of "Partisan" literature may say. But it is having a smashing success, which proves that the public is far from tired of Partisan literature or art if the work really has good qualities.

Les Nuits de la Colere tells the story of a patriot engaged in derailing trains. Hunted by the police, he takes refuge in the house of a friend. But the latter's wife, concerned above all with her domestic happiness and creature-comforts, grows fearful and hands him over to the authorities. This play was not especially calculated to please the Marigny Theater's audience, most of them coming from the "silk-stocking" districts of Paris, readers of *Figaro* and the Right-wing newspapers. Yet at every performance the audience is deeply stirred. And many of the spectators doubtless forget that during the occupation they too were on the side of selfishness and personal happiness no matter what. That is perhaps the best way of showing the human value of Salacrou's work.

So you see, dear American friends, Paris continues to live and vibrate, to discuss and struggle. Thought has never been freer. And despite the difficulties of daily life, despite the shortage of coal which is blocking our reconstruction (the coal of the Ruhr is not for us!), intellectual life is going on at an intense pace. That is a sign of health, strength and hope.

Translated by John Rossi.

TO SUM UP THE SEASON

Well, the customary pine spread over toys;
The solid-colored balls shone fragilely,
And lights burnt in the eyes of our small boys.

Outside was cold; like the keen runners of a sleigh
A wind rode in the antlered trees, bare
And tossing; a sheet of ice on the tough ground lay.

But, we had fowl and pudding to steam the air
That made beggars at the windows stop and peer;
And we had hot Tom 'n' Jerry! Happy pair!

Now, already, we're handling a New Year
With our brand new gloves, and "knocking 'em dead"
In splashing new cravats. We've had bluff cheer:

We got as good gifts as we gave; we're ahead
On last year's profits, and there's plenty to come;
We can feed ourselves, no matter who's unfed:

We've had a ripe time, in the final sum.
Let's not deny it, rather hope our luck holds out
To make '47 even a sweller sugar-plum.

R. Y. ZACHARY.

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CHINA: AFTER THE MARSHALL MISSION

What is behind the Vandenberg, Luce and Dulles "attack" upon the Truman-Marshall policy?

By FREDERICK V. FIELD

More than a year has passed since President Truman sent General Marshall to China. In a declaration issued with great fanfare by the White House on Dec. 15, 1945, Truman outlined the policy which Marshall was commissioned to carry out. Now the General is back, having admitted the failure of his mission. For this he has been promoted to the high office of Secretary of State and stands next in line for the Presidency.

The role of American imperialism in China has long been under attack from progressive circles. And since V-J Day this anti-imperialist movement has grown because of the increasing provocations of the imperialists themselves. Particularly in China, American policy has since the end of the war taken the form of open aggression against democracy and on behalf of any and all forms of reaction. The insistence on the part of American progressives that this ruinous policy give way to one which is consistent with world peace and security, and with the purposes for which the war was fought, has under these circumstances become firmer and more widespread.

Now a new element has entered the picture of American Far Eastern policy. The postwar efforts of the Truman administration in this vital area are under attack from the Right—specifically from the Republicans. This is a strange phenomenon indeed. A policy which, to refer to China only, has employed military intervention, which in a year and a half has cost American taxpayers nearly $4,000,000,000, which supports feudalism, gangsterism and corruption against democracy and unity and peoples' welfare, which employs and encourages terroristic measures—which in short has many of the characteristics of fascism—this is the policy which is criticized from the Right! Is it not fascist enough? Is the intervention on too small a scale? Is the method of assassination, political duplicity and civil war too mild?

Such questions come to mind in reading Senator Vandenberg's "warning," delivered recently in Cleveland, to the administration on its China policy. The Senator is not satisfied with it. He does not regard it as conforming to the bipartisan foreign policy to which he and John Foster Dulles had agreed. Vandenberg calls for direct and substantial aid to the Kuomintang. Well, one must ask, isn't that exactly what the government has been doing since V-J Day? Even the Dec. 15, 1945, declaration of President Truman cannot be regarded as an exception because it remained words on a piece of paper.

We should remind ourselves of what policies that declaration called for if only for the reason that the demagogy of America's foreign policy is one of its principal weapons to confound its democratic opponents. The declaration solemnly pledged the United States to aid neither side in the Chinese civil war, to refrain from armed intervention, and to hold back all forms of economic or financial aid to the Kuomintang until it had given way to the insistent demands of the Chinese people for internal unity and democracy. Truman's declaration, moreover, based itself upon the United Nations organization and, more specifically, upon the mutual needs of both China and the United States for political security and economic prosperity.

Harari.

It was a good document. As a document it carried forward the tradition of the Roosevelt-Stilwell period in Chinese affairs and therefore represented a rejection of General Patrick Hurley's mad efforts to provoke civil war. In the light of this document most Americans must now know that the Truman-Marshall era of American China policy has been a failure. If they did not reach this conclusion from their own observation of events they have learned it from General Marshall's own mouth. The reasons for this failure are less clear only because both the President and Marshall have sought to conceal them. The former, in his statement of December, 1946, placed the blame on the Chinese Communists; Marshall amended this by voicing strong criticism of the Kuomintang reactionaries as well. Both blithely skipped over the interventionary role of American imperialism, which was the principal cause of China's postwar breakdown. Moreover, by placing the burden of blame on the Chinese Communists they altogether passed over the main political development in China since V-J Day, namely, the consolidation at all levels—political, economic and military—of an alliance between US imperialism and Chinese reaction.

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Senator Vandenberg is certainly not raising a Rightist reactionary rumpus merely over the liberal tinge of some sections of the Truman and Marshall statements. No one, surely, could be more pleased than he that the liberal phrases do not correspond at all to the facts. What, then, is the Senator up to? Henry Luce, just back from a visit to Kuomintang China, has *Life* magazine raise the same cry. What is he up to? In view of the fact that nowhere in the world has American foreign policy been more nakedly imperialist than in China, we must examine the tactic of this new Vandenberg-Luce attack.

THE allegation that the administration's conduct of affairs in the Far East has not been part of the "bipartisan" policy is, of course, in itself false. The principal purpose and effect of the bipartisan policy was to poison American-Soviet relations and to substitute for Big Three unity an imperialist combine led by the United States and Britain and directed against the Soviet Union, against the colonial peoples' struggle for freedom and against all other manifestations of genuine democracy. The primary orientation of American policy in the Far East has been precisely that. Therefore when Senator Vandenberg pretends that the bipartisan foreign policy has not included our acts in China, Japan, Korea or the Philippines, and when he threatens such an extension of bipartisanship, he is seeking to confuse the public for some ulterior motive.

It is true that the object of the bipartisan policy has not been attained. American weapons, troops, airplanes, ships, funds and political and military strategists have not been enough to establish the firm hold of the reactionary Kuomintang. Chiang Kai-shek and the clique of gangsters through whom he seeks to govern have not been able to deliver the Chinese nation. In fact, the opposite is true. The more the Kuomintang government has become dependent upon American imperialism the more it has become dissociated from the Chinese people and the Chinese nation. Not only has the Marshall mission failed to enable Chiang Kai-shek to destroy the democratic opposition in China but the result of the post-V-J Day campaign has seen an immense strengthening of the peoples' forces and the historic rise of the prestige of the Chinese Communist Party and of the liberal Democratic League.

Having failed to impose an imperialist "peace" upon the Chinese people the bipartisan American policy has also failed of its large purpose—to establish along the borders of the Soviet Union and in the heart of the greatest colonial area in the world a secure base for imperialism. The American policy has been of such a nature and it has been conducted in such a way as to produce a situation which may lead to its utter defeat and to the serious weakening of the whole system of American imperialism.

Vandenberg, Luce and the other spokesmen for imperialism have not come forward with a new or different policy from the one which has been pursued under Truman, Byrnes and Marshall. *They have criticized the policy not in order to change it but in order to consolidate it.* They are disatisfied with the results of the policy, not with the policy itself. They approve the policy but they want to make it more effective.

We may, then, interpret their attack in the following way: The failures of the Truman-Marshall policy now threaten its continuance. Yet the rabid imperialists demand it be continued, despite failures. Imperialism can offer no alternative course. Among other things, a change in the US attitude toward China would have repercussions upon US foreign policy throughout the world. No liberal modifications of America's "rugged" imperialism can be contemplated by reaction; the fort of reaction must be held at all vital points. China is one such vital point. The mere fact that the China theater of imperialist aggression has not been successfully exploited does not to the reactionaries mean surrender at that point but rather an even more lavish effort to prevent an utter rout.

IT MUST be remembered that the failure of US imperialism to consolidate reaction in China has resulted primarily from the struggle of the enemies of imperialism. There are three principal groups contributing to this struggle. The burden has fallen on the brave shoulders of the Chinese people, led by the Chinese Communist Party and supported by the Democratic League. China's democratic forces have been staunchly, though indirectly, supported by the continual struggle of the Soviet Union against fascism and reaction. The diplomatic efforts of the Soviet Union in the United Nations, within the Council of Foreign Ministers and elsewhere has served as a powerful force holding in check the worst furies of American imperialists. To these two groups, the Chinese people and the Soviet Union, must be added a third indispensable one: the American anti-imperialists. This last group, even with its serious deficiencies, has nevertheless had some effect in blunting the most extreme excesses of the imperialists.

"The Boss," sketched in China by Marantz.

Vandenberg, Luce and the others doubtless seek to head off and divert the growing anti-imperialist movement in this country by raising false issues from the opposite direction. They strive to preserve the Truman-Marshall policy against the impact of the anti-imperialist movement by launching a major campaign against it. They describe the policy toward China as an aberration in the bipartisan line in order to reduce the attack upon it from the Left. There is more, however, to the Vandenberg-Luce business than

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this. Reaction is not content with merely preserving the Truman-Marshall policy. The Vandenberg-Luce campaign is designed primarily to effect more drastic methods of making the Truman-Marshall policy work. They call, in effect, for a new tactical approach to the problem of consolidating reaction in China.

It is not hard to imagine what such a new tactical approach would involve. It is a fact that there is by no means either unity or widespread enthusiasm in the various government departments and bureaus in Washington over the China policy. This dissatisfaction certainly does not reflect any strong anti-imperialist tendencies in places either high or low, but it does represent a sort of middle-of-the-road view that has considered America's naked interventionist aggression in China not in the interests of capitalism. Some businessmen have complained that they cannot conduct profitable trade with an economically ruined and turbulent China. And these complaints have managed to seep into government offices. The resulting dissatisfaction can by no means stop the policy of the big monopolists, but it has undoubtedly confronted it with problems and questions. The Vandenbergs and Luces want to get rid of all such nonsense. Government bureaus, and especially those dealing with foreign affairs, must be purged of all but the most faithful running dogs of imperialism.

Then there is that matter of the half-a-billion-dollar loan to the Kuomintang. General Marshall asked for and obtained it last April, but he has not yet turned it over to Chiang Kai-shek. He has been holding on to it in order to obtain some slight concessions from the Kuomintang leaders. The Vandenbergs, naturally, would like to see that money turned over and they don't care whether it goes to the outright feudalists whom Marshall finds to be rather inefficient and unreliable as puppets. Of course Vandenberg and Luce have no objection to the concessions which the administration has wrung out of the Kuomintang. But they have important ideas of their own on this subject.

LET us consider these concessions. More special privileges have been obtained by American imperialism in China in the year and a half since V-J Day than were obtained by all other countries in the century since the conclusion of the Opium War. To mention only the most important of these: the US has obtained extensive military rights in China, including the stationing of its own forces of all types, the establishment of a large military mission and above all the Americanization of the Chinese national armies, navy and airforce. To these should be added the building by the American Navy of bases purportedly for the use of China. A new commercial treaty has been successfully negotiated with the Kuomintang whereby a Chinese coolie has just as much right to purchase the Empire State Building on Fifth Avenue as the Standard Oil Company has of maintaining an office on the Shanghai Bund.

Then there is the matter of the new regulations governing Chinese corporations which permit foreigners equal participation with Chinese capital in place of the minority participation pre-

Amen.

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viously allowed. There is also the little detail about import tariff schedules favorable to Americans. One could almost say that it was only lack of time and personnel which has prevented the American government from negotiating a treaty with Chiang Kai-shek making English the official language of China.

Concessions such as these are not enough for American monopolists who in addition to what has been obtained for them by the American government are now struggling for special privileges of their own. It is known, for instance, that two of the most powerful American trusts are angling for extensive private concessions in China, one for the right to petroleum resources and the other to vital minerals such as wolfram and manganese. This type of concession finds special favor with the Vandenbergs and Luces. Far better from their point of view to turn over the American colonial possession of China directly to private corporations than to have the US government participate. This will be the new approach of American imperialism if the Vandenberg-Luce-Dulles attack succeeds. The Truman-Marshall policy will be stiffened and expanded; its benefits will accrue directly to the largest American trusts.

Such a line of policy can no more be made to prevail upon the Chinese people than that of the Marshall mission. Indeed it will even further arouse the antagonism of democratic forces throughout the world and especially in China. But it is here, in this country, that the greatest responsibility lies for curbing this aggression. The haughty confidence with which American reaction now pursues its designs must be met by the rapid and enormous expansion of the anti-imperialist forces.

This movement must find vigorous expression in all democratic sections of the population, particularly within organized labor and among its allies. It must direct its main fire at Vandenberg, Luce and Dulles and all others who would lead our foreign policy into even more dangerous channels than those followed since V-J Day. Because the plans of the extremists call for policies which are not different from but only more extravagant than those already prevailing the defeat of these plans will also constitute a heavy blow at the existing policies of Truman and Marshall.

NEW YORK'S TEACHERS WANT AN ANSWER

As we go to press the CIO Teachers' Union of New York has called upon the Teachers' Salary Conference to poll all city teachers as to whether the opening of the February school term should be postponed until the legislature acts upon their demands for doubled state aid for education and a $1,050 permanent salary increase. Mocked by a hypocritical Republican governor and a Republican-controlled state assembly and senate, the teachers are serving notice that they will no longer allow their own welfare or that of their charges, the children of New York, to be placed at the mercy of banking and real estate interests. Instead, they will take that welfare into their own hands.

"The Teachers' Union," the call states, "does not indulge in idle strike talk. We know that teachers like all other workers prefer to win their demands for a living wage by negotiation, collective bargaining and similar peaceful methods, but it is better for both the teachers and the children that the turmoil in the schools be ended as quickly as possible even if this requires temporarily closing the schools." It is well to remember that this call comes after a demonstration of nearly 10,000 teachers last week at a Board of Education budget hearing.

New Yorkers may recall the huge headlines by which the New York press greeted the decision of the legislature and the governor to grant "increases" to the teachers. It now turns out that these are not increases at all, but merely measures to stabilize the status quo in salaries for the city's teachers. In fact, meeting the demand of the teachers would result in their receiving exactly $2.89 more per week than they do at present. This is the "sacrifice" which the Republicans cannot bear to make; this is the sum for which they are prepared to let the school system go to hell.

It is significant that the AFL Teachers' Guild has joined hands with the Teachers' Union in the Salary Conference, with a statement that the "time honored professional methods" for achieving justice may be proved ineffective by Dewey and his education committee. Lessons learned hardest are sometimes the best. It is even more interesting that legislative members of the governor's own party are in revolt against their impeccable, tight-fisted chief. Some have even spoken of bucking the entire GOP machine. More power to them.

We urge the unqualified support of the New York teachers in whatever action they see fit and necessary to take in their fight for a decent living. We will continue to report developments in that fight and to let readers know what practical steps they can take to join in the struggle for education. For this is no teachers' fight alone. It is that of all the people of the city, the state, the country.

The Editors.

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ANNUAL REPORT TO THE STOCKHOLDERS

YES, we too are in business—the greatest of all: the business of building a better America. And we too have stockholders, who back our business. You. Our readers. It is our custom to report to you annually, advising you of your magazine's status. We present here some outstanding facts about NEW MASSES throughout 1946 that you, the stockholder, should know.

1. We rounded out thirteen years' existence as a weekly and thirty-six years of publication since our foundation as the old MASSES in 1911. Thirty-six years of campaigning for the common man of America, campaigning for a better America. We are proud that not one issue has failed to come off the press since NM's creation as a weekly in 1934. Commercial magazines can take that for granted, what with subsidies and heavy advertising income. We cannot. It is a difficult uphill, day-to-day battle to make ends meet.

2. Despite the increased heat on us, financially, we are proud to record this: there are more men and women writing and drawing for NEW MASSES today than a year ago. Not enough, true, but the graph is hearteningly upward. And that despite the onerous fact that our contributors, if paid at all, get nominal sums. This, we feel, is a tribute to the magazine and its aims.

3. Why do we have growing battalions around the magazine? Because they feel we are tackling the major issues of our time. There is heightened awareness that reaction is on the march. Simultaneously, confidence exists among our most active collaborators that reaction can be stopped dead in its tracks. NM has sought to disseminate that confidence, realistically, to progressives, by fact and by analysis. We are not pollyannas, but we know this: progress is stronger, on a world scale, than reaction, democracy is stronger than ever.

Because we devote our lives to this fulfillment, our readers, our writers, our artists support NEW MASSES. In this sense our magazine is unique in America. Hence our confidence. The men at the controls of America want a disheartened people: gloomy, pessimistic, imbued with the foreboding of defeat. Our responsibility is to dispel these moods, convince people of their power.

4. Because this is our job, representatives of the most enlightened in the country, in the world, are increasingly in our pages. Consider them: Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois, Louis Aragon, Prof. Dirk Struik, Dyson Carter, Ilya Ehrenburg, Konstantin Simonov, R. Palme Dutt, Claude Morgan (editor of "Lettres Francaises"), William Z. Foster, Herbert Aptheker, Eugene Varga, and many others.

And we seek increasingly to have all progressives—of whatever shade, Marxist and non-Marxist—appear in our pages. A number of these have contracted to write regularly for NM. In addition we are proud of William Gropper's weekly cartoon. Bill has been one of ours since the birth of this magazine. David Low, the famous British cartoonist, told me during the war when I was in London that Gropper is one of the greatest cartoonists of the world, if not the greatest.

5. The past year marked a further turning point in NM's career. We have energetically sought more fundamental articles of a broader cultural range. We have made some headway, our readers inform us. Much praise has reached our office for the work of such authorities as Rene Maublanc and Howard Selsam and Dirk Struik on Marxist philosophy; for Herbert Aptheker's on the Negro question, for S. Finkelstein's pieces on literature and music, Dyson Carter's articles on science, Aragon's on literature, Varga's on economics.

In addition we have sought to make a greater dent on America's literary scene. We have published a short story in virtually every issue (out of some 500 stories received during the year). NM has paid individual attention to every young writer who evidences promise. Almost a thousand young poets have sent us their work. And we have sought, in literary criticism, to bring forward our socially conscious critics, seeking always to infuse their work with a Marxist understanding of the world. Some three hundred books were reviewed, as well as outstanding plays, movies and art exhibits.

But don't misunderstand us. In all this we seek to avoid any impression that we are satisfied with NM's performance. We are not. But this we underscore: compared with our contemporaries NEW MASSES is infinitely closer to truth. Ours is a consistently progressive viewpoint, determined by the Marxist outlook, which, we are convinced, is THE scientific social outlook attuned to man's history, man's progress. We know that socialism is the solution to mankind's ills, and we know that many thousands more in America will come to agree with us.

This we know, too: if there were no NEW MASSES, the progressives of America would devote tremendous effort to create one. It is imperative that our nation have a Marxist weekly—at least one—that seeks to bring our viewpoint to counter that of the everything-for-profit class which dominates our country, our thinking, our education.

We know this: NM's responsibility is greater than at any time in its history. Democratic America must win the unity of all who want to stem reaction's offensive. Ours is the honorable job of welding together all these individuals and classes, of bringing allies together, recognizing that the working class and its natural supporters constitute tomorrow's salvation.

Ours is the big job of frustrating reaction's strategy: to divide progressives by trotting out the Bolshevik bogeyman. Hitler got away with it, but we know there is nothing in the stars to indicate America's fascists and their dupes need succeed. We know that everybody—whatever his political background—whether he be Marxist or non-Marxist—can, and must, work together, as contemporary history has shown in many parts of the world — France, Yugoslavia, Czechoslavakia, Poland, Bulgaria, Chile, in the Yenan areas of China.

That cooperation can happen here. That is our perspective for 1947 and we ask you to share this great endeavor with us. In a greater way than ever before. In a way history demands.

JOSEPH NORTH.

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Dear Reader:

TO GET to rock-bottom.

1. NEW MASSES has no endowment, no support, no big money, except that which we raise from our readers. We are not the organ of any organization, we belong to our readers. We have no one angel; we have many small angels. That means you.

2. Costs of publishing our magazine have skyrocketed by some fifty percent in the past two years. It costs more to print one issue today than ever in our history. One-half more.

3. There has been no corresponding increase in our income. Because of our viewpoint, because we refuse to compromise with big business, we cannot get such lucrative advertisements as, say, those of Bell Telephone which appear regularly in the pages of our contemporaries. Though our advertising department scours every possible avenue, we cannot get more than a fraction of our needs from that source. And so advertising, which is the life-blood of every commercial magazine, is a relatively minor item in our income.

4. Our operating income derives entirely from subscriptions, from newsstand sales, from advertising. That falls short of our necessary totals by $65,000 a year. In other words, we must raise more than $1,000 a week through other means than those cited above. That we strive to do through meetings, fund drives and personal contributions.

5. Each year, at this time, we must, necessarily, bring this whole issue to you, our readers. We have nobody else to turn to. And you have always seen NM through, as you can see by the fact that no issue has been missed since 1934. We have never cried "wolf, wolf." We have never done anything more than present you with the realities of this magazine, and you have always responded. True, this has required a terrific amount of work on the part of the staff, editorial as well as business. Editors have been obliged to sacrifice an undue amount of time to the hard, grueling, but not-to-be-denied job of keeping the magazine afloat.

6. This is where you come in. In all our past drives, our support has come from a cross-section of our readers, but not from all. We know why. It derives from the fact that most of our readers are involved in progressive activities in their communities, something we applaud and encourage. But we want to highlight this fact: unless you pay specific attention to NM, give it all it requires, all you can, our magazine is in serious, critical danger.

The past year saw our deficit rise to dangerous heights, despite budget-shaving, despite everything we could do to keep expenses down. The size of our staff is far from adequate, but the printer's demands, the engraver's, the paper company's, have leaped. The wolf is just outside the door.

Yet he could be staved off, could be driven miles away, if EVERY ONE of our readers understood NM's situation, took it to heart. If they did, we could get out a magazine at maximum.

This year will require $65,000 to make both ends meet. And $40,000 of it must be raised within the next four months. This is no arbitrary date, but is one that reflects our creditors' demands. It means an average during the next period of $10,000 a month.

This is the year of decision. What is done in 1947 to build the democratic anti-war coalition will determine the 1948 elections. Will determine whether the GOP will drive America down the highroad to fascism and war. Or whether we shall win that future for which thousands of Americans and millions of their allies died in the war.

The rest is up to you. We await your answer.—THE EDITORS.

HERE'S MY ANSWER:

To NEW MASSES, 104 East 9th Street, New York 3, N. Y.

$..... is enclosed as my initial contribution.

IN ADDITION, I want to pledge $..... so that NEW MASSES can fully cover its planned budget. (Please indicate the date or dates of your pledged donations.)

NAME ..... ADDRESS .....

CITY ..... ZONE ..... STATE .....

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GABRIEL OVER MRS. GRUBER

"A tyrant will reign. His mark will be the Sign of the Beast . . . like the NRA—you remember that blue eagle—" And the landlady was ready.

A Short Story by ERNESTINE JAEDIKER

Illustrated by the Author.

It is impossible to think of the sky ending; what could be beyond it? It is just as impossible to think of the sky not ever ending, for what could have made a thing so big that it doesn't ever end any place? Could there ever have been nothing? Must there always have been something in order for there to be something now? Or is there a force that can make something out of nothing?

When you have thoughts like that in your eyes, it is hard to look smart or dignified.

A lady I have never seen walks by. She is walking some place herself. I recognize the familiar face of an Aunt to some Child. I have an exuberant impulse to run up to her and shake her by the shoulders and look into her eyes, and say, "Hello Aunt! Where are you going? Why do you think you are here, breathing and walking and feeling?"

Probably she is thinking that she hopes she will get home in time to make sure the windows are shut before it rains.

I bury the fear and the wonder. My face feels tense in its effort to look like the face of a Person walking somewhere with dignity.

A few days later, there was a kitchen and bedroom to rent on Sixth Street. It was in the Lebanon paper at a little after three. I walked as fast as I could, to get there first.

I heard a lady walking behind me. I tried to see nonchalantly out of the corner of my eye, did she have the newspaper under her arm; were we going to the same address? Would we make a dash for the same door? Would I be polite, or would I be steadfast in my purpose?

She had no newspaper. Then did she know I was on the track of an apartment and she was going along because she hadn't been downtown yet to buy the paper? I walked faster. She walked faster . . . then she turned a corner. I went on alone.

It was a wooden three-story house, with others very much like it on both sides. It looked old, but respectable. I walked up the porch steps. The shade felt nice and cool after walking quickly in the sun. It felt like the first lick of an ice cream cone on a hot day. I rang the kind of bell that has a little knob and you give it a twist, and waited anxiously.

A large woman came to the door.

"Is the apartment still available?" I asked.

"Oh . . . yes. You're the first one. Will ya come in here?"

She led me into a very neat sitting room.

"Do ya mind if I ask you a few questions first?"

"No, I don't mind," I said.

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"Sit down." She sat on the couch, I sat in a chair. The room was pretty dark except for the light coming in through two front windows which reached to the floor. They had long clean lace curtains in front of them.

She was big without looking fat. Her bosom sloped into her stomach. Her hair was dark—drawn into a bun at the back, covering her ears. It made her look old-fashioned.

"Is it for yourself you wanted the rooms?" she asked.

"For myself and husband."

"I ask because there was a man here the other day looking for a room for his daughter. . . . You look so young to be married. How old are you?"

"Twenty-three."

"Oh! I thought you was about seventeen! Have ya been housekeeping before?"

"Oh yes. I've been married over four years. We had a place in Chicago and in Mississippi and in Tampa, Florida."

"Is your husband in the Army?"

"Yes. He's stationed here at the Gap."

"Do you smoke?"

"No," I said, wondering whether it would make any difference, "but Harold does."

"I ask because the last ones who had the kitchen burnt holes in one of my dresser covers. *She* said *he* done it, but I went up there one day when Curley—that was her husband—he had gone to Texas for a few weeks, and she stayed here. Well! I was so shocked when I saw that dresser cover! There was a new hole—now *he* couldn't a done it!"

I shook my head and tried to look horrified.

"Where are you from?" she asked.

"I'm from New York City."

"Is *he* from New York too?"

"No, he's from Philadelphia—that is, he was born in New York and they moved to—"

"Well, how did you get together?"

Finally she led me upstairs.

It was a nice bedroom and a small kitchen, separated by a bathroom which we would have to share with the other roomers. It was the only one in the house. We would fetch our water from there, since there was none in the kitchen. And I would share the landlady's refrigerator. A back staircase connected her kitchen with mine. In fact, my kitchen seemed to have been converted from a wide staircase landing.

We went downstairs and I paid the first week's rent, which was eight dollars, and twenty-five cents for the gas.

Seventeen people came for the rooms after I left.

AFTER we moved in, one of the first things that impressed Harold and me were the signs that were hung on the walls. Little cards with a decorative flower here and there. One at the bottom of the front stairs said, "Christ is the Master of this House." In our bedroom one said "Unto the Coming of the Lord." There was also a picture of Christ painted on glass in cerise and green with a background of crushed silver paper that caught the light. In my kitchen, a little round thing on which to set down hot pots said, "God Will Supply All Your Need." It had a crude drawing of a glass of milk, two carrots and a lettuce or cabbage.

There was also a Bible in our bedroom, which had been placed there by the Gideon Society.

At first the cards on the wall were somewhat comforting. I did not mind thinking about God in this place away from home.

But then it occurred to me that I did not happen to be a Christian, and what if the landlady were anti-Semitic? It was comfortable having a kitchen. It was sort of secure. The thought of eating out alone again and looking for another apartment made me feel sickish. I decided not to tell her I was Jewish, if she asked.

One morning, Mrs. Gruber, which was the landlady's name, was on the second floor to go into the bathroom, and she called out loud, "Are you in there? Are you in the bedroom?"

I called out "Yes," and opened the door.

She asked, "Are you going downtown today?"

I was, and she said that she was, so we arranged to go together.

As we walked, naturally we talked. There was an old Quaker lady in the bakery we stopped at, only they call themselves the Plain People. We talked about them. Then we walked past her church so I could see it. Inevitably, as I feared, she asked me what I was.

I knew what she meant. She meant what was the church and the national derivation of my folks, not what do I believe. It seems that what church your parents belonged to is a question of burning interest in Lebanon. I could not have gotten out of it by saying, "I am a Citizen of the World." Landladies have no idea that religion is a private thing. And maybe they are right. Maybe it isn't a private thing at all.

She was waiting for an answer. I said the first thing that came into my head. I said "I am one-quarter German Lutheran (which was true) and three-quarters Arabian (which was not true).

Mrs. Gruber looked blank.

"You know," I continued, "Syria, Arabia—"

"Oh—yes," she said uncertainly.

I rushed on to give some proof of my statement. "I'll say a few words in Arabic. *Alhamdu Le-alleheh* means *Allah be praised*. *Saida* means hello."

I don't know if Mrs. Gruber believed me, but if she didn't she never said so. She, it turned out, was Pennsylvania Dutch and belonged to the United Brethren church.

AFTER I finished the dishes that night I went downstairs and sat on the front porch, to wait for Harold. He was on the late shift. It was a very warm night.

The porch was just a cement step without any railing. It had a canvas canopy. I looked at the houses, one next to the other, up and down the block. Very few lights were on. I wondered where everyone was. The house across the street was a narrow red brick one. It looked dark and deserted. There were no curtains in the windows. I was glad when Mrs. Gruber came out and sat down next to me.

She spoke about a meeting of Youth for Christ which she had been to. She seemed pleased when I asked questions.

"History since Adam and Eve," she said, "has been divided into dispensations. Each dispensation was a chance to be Saved. Right now we are in the last one—the dispensation of Grace. It's called that because Man doesn't deserve it and it's only by the Grace of God that it's given to us."

"That's very interesting," I said. I thought I may as well learn what I could about the religion, but that it would be better not to argue or disagree about it. "What will happen after this dispensation?" I asked.

"Well, the trumpet will blow and

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everyone who is Saved will rise in the twinkling of an eye and join the Lord in the clouds."

"When will that be?" I wanted to know.

"We're waiting on the trumpet now. We don't know exactly when it will be, but they think it will be very soon. There are certain signs—they are prophesied in the Bible." I could see her eyes shining in the half-dark. I felt chilly.

"What will happen after you rise?" I asked.

"Then there will be seven years of the worst tribulation on Earth," she said pleasantly. "The Christians won't be here to keep the rest of them in line. There will be the worst riot of sinning!"

My back went up at that and I felt I had to protest.

"I don't think I need anybody to keep me in line," I said gently, "and I think I'm a pretty good person on the whole. In fact I'm good just because I want to be. I don't believe in Heaven and Hell so I'm not doing it for a reward. Isn't that more of a virtue than being good for the sake of reward?"

She thought of this, but only for a second.

"Oh no," she said. "It's much harder for a Christian to be good than for you because the Devil bothers Christians most. He bothers them that's closest to the Lord because he knows he shall have the others' souls anyway."

I gave up. "What else will happen after the trumpet blows?" I asked.

"A tyrant will reign. His mark will be the Sign of the Beast. This is in Revelation—do you know the Bible?"

"Well, some of it," I said.

"I've told lots of roomers things they didn't know. Those will get along better who bow to the Sign of the Beast," she continued. "Like the NRA—you remember when people had to have that blue eagle—but those that bow will be lost in the end."

"Then what will happen after the seven years' tribulations?"

"Well, then we will return to the Earth and Christ will reign as King of Jerusalem for a thousand years. That will be the Millenium."

I was quiet for a little while. Mrs. Gruber was lost in her revery.

"What will happen to me if I'm not Saved?" I asked, breaking the silence.

She looked at me. "The world is made up of Christians and Sinners. If you aren't Saved, why then you're a Sinner."

"What does that mean?" I asked.

"Why, you will go to Hell," she said firmly.

I did not contradict her because I didn't want to hurt her feelings.

It was good to see Harold's familiar face when he came home. We went upstairs and I told him about the conversation. He laughed. "I'd like to see her rise in the twinkling of an eye," he said.

ONE night after Harold had left for the night shift, I went downstairs to put the milk bottles out. I turned Mrs. Gruber's kitchen light on. It was a large kitchen with polished wood cabinets. Her lone setting was on the round table as usual, neatly covered with a cloth napkin. Her bedroom was dark but beyond it I could see a light in the front room.

After I set the bottles outside I walked lightly back across the kitchen, hoping to turn off the light and get upstairs without attracting her attention. Halfway across, I heard her call, "Ernestine, is that you?"

"Yes," I answered, resignedly.

"Can you come here a minute?" I went through the dark bedroom and into the front room, where she was sitting in a high-backed easy chair next to a lamp.

"I'm reading this book," she said. "You might be interested to read it." She handed it to me.

It was titled *The Red Terror*. I read a few lines at random and felt my blood rising.

"It's true," she said. "It tells how

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portside patter

By BILL RICHARDS

News Item: Bell Telephone Company advertisement boasts that seventeen of its top executives started at an average salary of $14 a week.

I started working for Bell Telephone when Don Ameche was still in diapers. Each week I was paid $5 and the latest Horatio Alger novel. Today, thanks to free enterprise and free lunch, I am President - in - charge - of - sneering - at - people - who - want - telephones.

Success stories are common in the company. A friend of mine started out twenty years ago collecting $12 a week from pay phones. That same man today is collecting over $500.

In 1919 a young veteran went to work as a mere office boy. He was recently appointed to carry the heaviest responsibility of Bell Telephone on his shoulders — he delivers Manhattan phone books.

One young lawyer began his career with Bell twenty-five years ago as an ordinary clerk. At present he handles all lawsuits filed by people who get their fingers jammed in dial phones.

The great majority of our executives started working at wages ranging from $5 to $20 a week. Bell Telephone wants to give every employe the same opportunity.

Senator Taft says he believes in "the greatest good for the greatest number." Perhaps he'll decide not to be a candidate after all.

●

The press hails General Marshall as representing a "new face abroad" for the US. It's the same face we recently lost in China.

●

Charlie McCarthy is celebrating his tenth anniversary on the air. If this popularity continues the Republicans will be forced to recognize him as Presidential timber.

●

Bilbo is said to be recovering from his recent operation. The big problem now is how to sterilize the instruments thoroughly enough.

●

There is a move afoot to change the name Boulder Dam to Hoover Dam. In keeping with the proposed change they should release the water drip by drip.

●

Hearst is preparing a new drive against vivisection. Probably a defense mechanism of some sort.

●

Leo Durocher, who holds his own in arguments with umpires, has got married. Some cynics feel he may be stretching his luck.

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Russia is going to invade Palestine."

"What makes him think Russia is going to invade Palestine?" I asked. My face felt very hot.

"Why, it's prophesied in the Bible," she said. "Russia is called Gog in the Bible—that was its name then—they had different names, you know."

"There's no sense talking to her," I thought. I started trying to edge away without looking impolite, which is quite a task.

"This book," she continued, "tells about the Communists too — how they get money from Stalin."

"But that isn't so," I said firmly. "I couldn't possibly believe these things, Mrs. Gruber."

"Why, the newspapers say so too. Don't you believe them either?" She looked at me intently.

"Well, ordinary people own the newspapers." I was talking quickly. "How do you know they tell the truth if it doesn't suit them?" My forehead felt prickly, like seltzer, and my pulse was beating very fast.

Mrs. Gruber took off her reading glasses and peered at me.

"You don't believe the Bible and you don't believe the newspapers! Why, what *do* you believe?" she asked, with an air of crowning triumph.

MRS. GRUBER was anxious to add my soul to her small collection because it means extra bonuses in Heaven, the more souls you save. You get to sit nearer the Throne of the Lord. "Otherwise," she explained, "you're just in Heaven."

"Is that bad?" I asked.

She sat down on the back stairs which led from her kitchen up to mine, her head rising just above the level of my kitchen floor. For a long while she quoted from Revelation and examined my floor, while I tried to eat. Finally, exasperated, I said, "I certainly hope the trumpet blows soon!" She looked up at me. "Why do *you* wish it?" she asked, somewhat surprised.

"Oh—I just think it will be nice."

"Well, I hope so too. It *will* be nice," she agreed, pleased.

There was a friendly silence, which I broke.

"Who shall I pay our rent to after it blows?"

"What?" She laughed. "Oh don't say that. Why, you might be Saved and not know it!"

"Oh, I'm not Saved. Who shall we pay it to?" I insisted.

"Well," she considered, the practical side finally winning out, "I believe that a few of my relatives will be left. I suppose you shall pay it to them."

"I guess there will always be somebody to pay the rent to," I sighed.

MAKING MORE AND GETTING LESS

"More pay? Just work harder." But the facts show labor productivity rising while workers' real wages decline.

By RALPH J. PETERS

LABOR productivity has bulked large in discussions of economic problems arising out of reconversion. It is coming to the fore once again in the preliminary skirmishes for position in the 1947 wage campaign.

Before launching into our own discussion of labor productivity, it might be well for us to make sure that we are agreed upon the meaning of the term. For the purposes of this article, labor productivity is taken to be the measure of a worker's output in a given interval of time. To illustrate, we might say, for example, that the measure of a shoemaker's productivity is his output of four pairs of shoes in an eight-hour day. Let us assume, now, that in the following year he raises his productivity by 25% to make five pairs of shoes in an eight-hour day. If he succeeds again the next year in raising his productivity by another 25%, he will be making six and a quarter pairs of shoes in the same eight-hour day. But now let's look back to the beginning when he made only four pairs a day. The six and a quarter pairs represent an increase of 56% over the four pairs. Increasing at the rate of 25% for each of two years, labor productivity actually increased by 56%. We conclude therefore that labor productivity compounds itself; it increases like the proverbial rolling snowball. And that is a very important fact to know.

Though he serves admirably to illustrate some of the basic characteristics of labor productivity, our busy shoemaker cannot claim to represent the typical worker in modern assembly-line industry. On the production line, no single worker completes any one unit of product from start to finish. We could not say, for example, that one worker produced five automobiles in the month of December. But we do know how many workers there are in the automobile industry, and we know, too, how many automobiles they turn out every month or year by their collective labor on the assembly line. We can readily put this data on an index basis, and if we divide employment into output, we arrive at a simple but adequate measure, which indicates the trend in productivity.

In order to provide some background to this discussion, let us try out our simple technique on the data made available by the periodical censuses of manufactures conducted by the Bureau of the Census. By getting the ratio between manufacturing employment and manufacturing output, we can measure the long-term trend in labor productivity from 1899 to 1939. This is the way it works out:

LABOR PRODUCTIVITY IN MANUFACTURING, 1899 TO 1939

Year	Output	Production Workers	Productivity
1899	100	100	100
1939	374	176	212

(Note: Data for this table was taken from the "Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1944-45," page 794.)

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In the forty-year period covered by this table, labor productivity more than doubled. And this was the result of the fact that there was an almost fourfold rise in manufacturing output from 100 in 1899 to 374 in 1939, while the rise in number of production workers was slightly less than twofold, from 100 in 1899 to 176 in 1939. On the basis of this evidence we are justified in assuming that a steady, long-term rise in labor productivity has been a marked characteristic of American capitalist development. On the average, from 1899 to 1939 labor productivity has risen at the rate of 1.9% per year compounded.

Before we tackle the wide range of implications in this long-term rise in labor productivity, let us see if we can determine who benefited by it. Did the benefits accrue to labor, to capital, or to that nebulous entity so passionately cultivated by a host of editorial pens, the public? First let us consider the public. It will be quite simple to

find out whether the public shared the benefits of rising productivity. We'll just take a look at the story of prices and see if increased productivity was passed along to the public in the form of lowered prices. The next table tells what happened on that score:

WHAT HAPPENED TO CONSUMER PRICES, 1899 TO 1939

Year	Consumer Prices
1899	100
1939	188

(Note: The consumer price index of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, US Department of Labor, goes back to the year 1913. In order to get the relationship of prices in 1939 to prices in 1899, it was necessary to use the BLS index of wholesale prices for the period before 1913. Although they move together, wholesale prices are usually lower than consumer prices. This would have the effect of making our index of consumer prices, 1899 to 1939, show a somewhat lower rise than if we had data on consumer prices all the way back to 1899. Data taken from "Statistical Abstract," page 415 ff.)

Here's a stickler for those troubadors of big business who extrude thousands of words to prove undying devotion to their beloved public. How will they ever explain it away? If the benefits of the 112% rise in productivity had been passed along to the public, then it would be fair to expect that prices should have fallen by something like 50%. But it did not happen that way. Instead, prices nearly doubled.

I CAN already hear that gentle crooning voice. That's the NAM pouring honey in my ear and telling me in soothing tones that the reason they could not help out the dear old public is because labor has been grabbing everything in sight. I don't know what degree of high-powered persuasion it would require to get the NAM ever to admit that labor forms the largest element of the public and that labor must buy things at the same price as other members of the public. But luckily we do not have to attempt that thankless task; we have other ways of showing how labor fared over the course of years. The next table gives some idea of the history of real wages from 1899 to 1939:

REAL WAGES IN MANUFACTURING, 1899 TO 1939

Year	Payrolls	Consumer Prices	Real Payrolls	Real Wages per Worker
1899	100	100	100	100
1939	480	188	255	145

(Note: Data from previously cited sources. Real payrolls are obtained by dividing the index for consumer prices into the index for dollar payrolls. The result shows what wages can buy in terms of consumers' goods, and eliminates the effects of price changes. Real Wages per Worker are obtained by dividing the index for production workers from the first table into real payrolls.)

Labor did succeed in pushing up dollar wages over the period of years covered by this table. We must remember that these gains did not come of themselves, but were the result of almost continuous struggle, culminating in the dramatic organization drive of the CIO in the Thirties. We must note also that over the years, just as today, big business has been able to run up prices, taking back with one hand a large part of what it is compelled to give with the other. Labor has not shared the full benefits of its own rising productivity. Real wages went up only 45% as against the 112% rise in labor productivity. The gold-brick salesmen of the NAM cannot shift the blame for rising prices onto high wages, because we know now that labor has been getting a smaller and smaller share of its greatly increased output.

Who, then, were the chief beneficiaries of rising productivity? There can be but one answer. The capitalists, of course. They have been able to make rising productivity pay off in two ways. Increased productivity has lowered the costs of production, while higher prices have swelled profits.

The fact that the capitalists are the beneficiaries of rising productivity brings us to a point from which we must start off on a little journey of exploration into the farther reaches of economic theory. We are heading now for the bourne from which almost no man returns, at least not without an all-pervasive feeling of drowsiness. We'll make it as painless

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as possible, but this really is a vital part of our discussion of productivity.

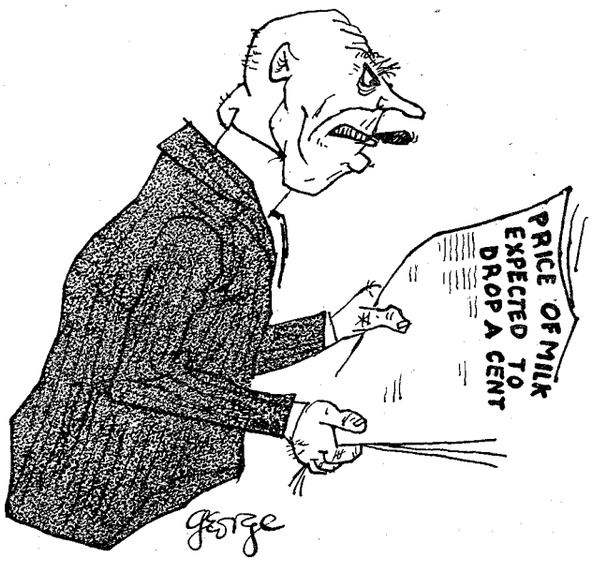
Productivity is an indicator of the stage of development of the most basic forces of capitalism. In the first place it is a reflection of the rising organic composition of capital. We shall define this term as we go along. At the first quick look, rising productivity means an increase in the rate of surplus value, taking surplus value as the value the worker produces over and above the value of his wages. Rising productivity has the effect of increasing the rate of surplus value (the ratio of surplus value to wages) because the worker can produce more goods in the same interval of time and therefore the time he must devote to reproducing his own wages is relatively shorter while the time he can devote to the production of surplus value grows so much longer. If we look again, we see other interacting developments that complicate the picture; we can itemize them something like this:

1. In order to achieve a higher rate of surplus value by means of a higher level of productivity, the capitalist must expand the part of his total capital that is invested in the means of production (fixed capital); for the very basis of rising productivity lies in the continuous installation of ever greater masses of more productive machinery and equipment, to be served by relatively fewer workers.
2. This can only mean that the share of total capital that is allotted to the means of production or fixed capital expands more rapidly than the share allotted to wages or variable capital.
3. The ratio of fixed capital to variable capital defines the organic composition of capital; when fixed capital grows more rapidly than variable capital, we say the organic composition of capital increases.
4. Now, surplus value arises only from that part of total capital which goes to wages: that is, variable capital.
5. But the rate of profit is reckoned by taking the ratio of surplus value to total capital.
6. If fixed capital grows faster than variable capital, then variable capital is becoming always a smaller and smaller part of total capital, and the chances are that the ratio of surplus value to total capital will have a tendency to fall.
7. The result is that the rate of profit, by definition the ratio of surplus value to total capital, will also have a tendency to fall.

STARTING off with a discussion of rising productivity, we have arrived at the tendency of the rate of profit to fall. And this is one of the most important processes of capitalist development. From time to time it brings about a situation where the capitalists decide that additional investment will no longer pay off in sufficient profits. And we must remember that this can happen even when the rate of surplus value is very high, if at the same time the wages portion of total capital is, relatively speaking, very small. When the capitalists stop investing they don't start again until the ensuing economic crash has destroyed or devalued enough fixed capital (by junking of older plants, writing off capital assets, etc.) to establish a new balance between fixed and variable capital that will yield a more promising rate of profit. In a previous article, we showed that the current rate of capital formation, or investment, in view of the record level of capital accumulation, is so low as to be dangerously near the depression stage.

Rising productivity also expresses another long-term trend that leads periodically to depressions by a slightly different, though interconnected, road. This aspect is not so difficult to grasp. Rising productivity after all means that more goods are turned out for relatively less wages. In this regard, rising productivity reflects the most fundamental of all the contradictions of capitalism, that between the ever expanding capacity to produce and the relatively contracting power to consume. This contradiction of course is characteristic of American capitalist development, and is readily apparent from the simple tables used in this article; output per worker showed an increase of 112%, but real wages rose by only 45%. Under capitalism, the capitalists are able to appropriate the benefits of rising productivity. This fact explains why purchasing power chronically runs behind expanding production.

Let us now try to evaluate the economic developments of 1946 in the United States in the light of the things we have learned about productivity. During the reconversion period that ran from June 1945 to the early months of



1946, the capitalists set up a great howl about falling labor productivity. They and their stooges in the commercial press maintained that low labor productivity was the root of all the evils American capitalism was afflicted with during reconversion. Even today we hear echoes of these complaints. Inflation, critical shortages—in short, every kind of economic ruction—was laid at the door of low labor productivity, and still is. Even certain liberals, who should know better, fell for this specious argument and joined the pack that wailed piteously for labor to be good boys and come through with a little more productivity. President William Green of the AFL, whose public statements seem to reflect every nuance of big business propaganda requirements, obliged by taking up the cry. Here is a sample of his advice to workers, appearing in the September 1946 issue of *Labor's Monthly Outlook*, the AFL publication on economic affairs: "Continue to increase production and efficiency. This is the only way to get a wage increase without raising prices and living costs. . . ."

NOW we must see what has been going on during the last few months. True, output per worker declined during reconversion from wartime peaks; it remained, however,

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substantially above pre-war levels (as shown in my previous article). But if production had been maintained, productivity would not have fallen. There was certainly to be expected a certain decline in production during the changeover from military to civilian output. This lag was, however, aggravated beyond its necessary limits by the tactics of big business. The big corporations failed to maintain the rate of production because they were too busy with sitdown strikes and various violent campaigns to get all war-time controls taken off "free enterprise." They succeeded in their campaigns, and were also able to use the effects of their sabotage as a pretext for shifting the blame for low labor productivity onto the workers. And going one step further, the corporations tried to hold off legitimate demands for increased wages by raising the cry of low productivity.

Today we are in a full boom phase. Production is at a high rate—in fact, at a record peacetime level. The boom has been on since February, 1946, the bottom of the reconversion slump. It is instructive to analyze the elements of the boom through the latest month for which complete data is available:

PRODUCTIVITY IN MANUFACTURING, FEBRUARY TO OCTOBER, 1946.

Month	Output	Production Workers	Productivity
February	100	100	100
October	127.2	120.3	105.7

Output per worker has certainly increased during this brief eight-month period. Now let us see whether the workers got the reward that was held out to them in Bill Green's statement, an increase in real wages:

REAL WAGES IN MANUFACTURING, FEBRUARY TO OCTOBER, 1946.

Month	Payrolls	Consumer Prices	Real Payrolls	Real Wages per Worker
February	100	100	100	100
October	135.9	114.5	118.7	98.7

(Note: These two tables are based on data published in the monthly "Survey of Current Business," US Department of Commerce. Real wages per worker is obtained by dividing the index for production workers in the first table into the index for real payrolls in the second.)

In this analysis of the greatest peacetime boom in the history of the United States, we see that the developments in this specific boom fall largely into the long-term pattern established by the previous tables in this article. Productivity has risen by 5.7% in eight months, or at the annual rate of 8.6%, more than four times the annual rate for the period 1899-1939. Here again, prices went up so fast that neither public nor labor benefited. This time, however, real wages not only lagged behind rising productivity, but actually fell.

So much for the specious argument that a rise in productivity is a painless way to get a wage increase. It has not been true over the long term, and it is certainly not true in the present boom. Despite many successful strikes for wage increases in the current period, real wages have fallen. We can imagine the course wages would have taken had the entire labor movement followed the false advice of Bill Green.

The American people face an entirely different prospect from that outlined by Green. The chances are that we shall be rewarded by the biggest depression in our long history of boom and bust. The analysis we have made of the current boom tells us that forces have come into play which require a more mature appraisal than the recent pollyanna statement of President Truman, who said we won't have a "recession" in 1947 "if everybody stays at work." The very fact that, to put it in his own homely words, "everybody is at work" means that the full force of rising productivity is brought into play. Each worker is producing more goods, but his real wages are falling. How long can that go on, Mr. President?

That the capitalists are able during the current boom to appropriate the benefits of rising productivity to such a degree as to depress wages means that economic danger lies immediately ahead. For under capitalism, rising productivity spells "overproduction," depression and mass unemployment. Only when the benefits of rising productivity accrue to society as a whole, under socialism, can we plan our economy in such a way as to make productivity, production capacity, and consuming power move together in a continuously upward direction.

CHARLES KRUMBEIN

In Memoriam

CHARLES KRUMBEIN was the prototype of the Communist leader and when he died last week the people of America, particularly the workingmen, lost one of their most stalwart champions. Here was a man who had devoted his entire lifetime to the advancement of mankind, who never asked anything for himself, who sought only the good of the people. And his indefatigable labors in that cause hastened his end, struck him down in the prime of life.

He came to the Communist movement as a tested and courageous trade unionist. And thousands of AFL workers in Chicago, particularly, recall his record in the early Twenties, remember him as one of that group of Communists who were primarily responsible for transforming the Chicago Federation of Labor into one of the most progressive trade union centers in the country, during that period.

They would also remember his unswerving fight to clean the AFL Steamfitters Union of the tyranny of "Skinny" Madden, the notorious gangster who did not hesitate to use the revolver on those who crossed his will. But Krumbein was already at that time not one to stand aside because of personal danger, and his battle on behalf of the union's rank and file won the respect of great numbers of Chicago workers. His was also a key role in the historic struggle to amalgamate craft unions into industrial unions; and he played a big part in the early fight for independent political action which resulted, in 1924, in the candidacy of Robert M. La Follette for President.

So his record throughout the years.

In the many tributes paid his memory, one phrase is common, summarizes his life, and can best serve as an epitaph to his work: "He was a true son of the working class."

THE EDITORS.

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BALZAC AND STENDHAL

Two men speak to us from their own times in words that will not soon be forgotten.

By MILLEN BRAND

BALZAC, *by Stefan Zweig. Viking.* $3.75.
STENDHAL, *by Matthew Josephson. Doubleday.* $4.

IT IS of considerable interest that important biographies of the two greatest French writers of the early nineteenth century should appear together, so that their lives—which touched closely only at one moment, the publication of *The Charterhouse of Parma*—can be considered, to some extent, side by side. Balzac had met Stendhal "in society" a few times, and urged by Stendhal's cousin, Romain Colomb, he finally got to work and poured out a seventy-page review of *The Charterhouse of Parma,* publishing it in his own magazine, the *Revue de Paris,* in September and October, 1840. Stendhal was practically unknown and in spite of this tribute from Balzac, his death two years later was one of the most obscure in literary history, receiving notices of three lines in only two Paris newspapers, his name being misspelled in one of them. Stendhal acknowledged Balzac's review, but they had no further contact.

But while two men and two writers may not meet, it is importantly relevant that they live in the same world at the same time. Before I discuss this relevance, something should be said about the quality of the two books as biographies.

Stefan Zweig's *Balzac* is a posthumous, complete, but not at all final draft of the great book he planned to write. In a postscript to the book, Richard Friedenthal, the editor, says that Zweig called the book his "large Balzac," which "was to be his *magnum opus,* and he had been working at it for ten years. It was to be a summing up of his own experience as an author and of what life had taught him." As it stands, the book is not that, and in any case less of Zweig and more of Balzac would be desirable.

The Zweig book has two major defects: (1) not much of the real interaction of Balzac and his environment is felt in the study of a man who was the "secretary" of the events of his age, and (2) too little of the Balzac of *The Human Comedy* is felt in the book. The very weight of Balzac's literary output, the appearance of masterpieces by the month rather than by the year, make it difficult to do any thoroughgoing study of the man in relation to his work in any limited space. Yet Zweig had shown in his essay on Balzac in *Three Masters* that he could suggest the writer's stature through his work. It is not enough, as Zweig does casually in the present book, to say of Balzac: "Writing was not a necessity to him, and he never felt it to be his mission," and then to attempt to explain him, *a la* Gautier, as a "force which is more potent than electricity," a mere force of personal will.

B. Millard.

MATTHEW JOSEPHSON'S *Stendhal* is a finished piece of work, it is roughly a hundred pages longer, and it has to deal with a few novels as the essence of Stendhal's creative work as against the vast output of Balzac; it profits by these advantages. It also has a much firmer feeling for the man in relation to his time. Yet with these superiorities, it lacks something of the personal fire of Zweig which appears even in the unfinished *Balzac.* And it is given to over-easy generalizations of the popular writer, like (p. 94): "He was so keen and yet so gullible, so logical and yet so timorous—sage and coxcomb at once."

Stendhal was born sixteen years before Balzac, in 1783, and this single fact has a very considerable importance in comparing the two lives. Maturing precociously, Stendhal was a full generation ahead of Balzac. He was riding high on the wave of Napoleonic careerism when Balzac was still a child; he was doing what Balzac's father was doing at the same time, making a good thing out of the commissariat. But even more important, in some ways, was the difference of educational influences. Stendhal felt the full force of eighteenth century materialism. He was already a democrat and an anti-clerical when the Revolution broke in 1792, and at the age of twelve, he scrawled on the walls of his room: *Live free or die.* His family was "relentlessly aristocratic and religious," and he was relentlessly against his family. When he heard of the king's death, he says in his autobiography, "I was seized by one of the sharpest feelings of joy I have ever experienced in my life. The reader will perhaps think that I am cruel, but what I was at ten, I still am at fifty-two."

A direct result of the revolution was that Stendhal had the privilege of attending one of the democratic, anti-clerical lay schools opened in Grenoble under the Constitution of the Year III of the Republic. One of his masters, Dubois-Fontenelle, "espoused a materialistic philosophy, supported by many citations from the writings of John Locke, Condillac, and Helvetius," and the school in general "was designed as a preparation of 'general grammar' of scientific thinking, and

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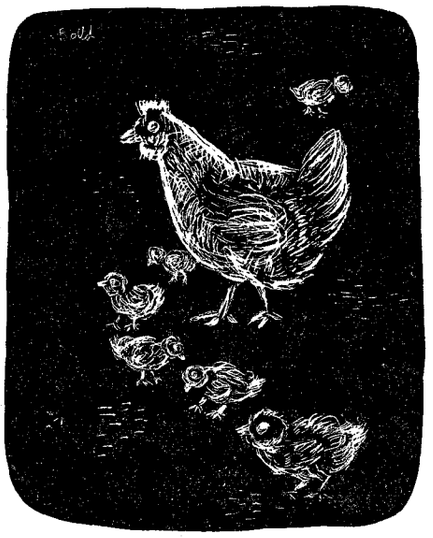
at an impressionable age provided Henri Beyle (Stendhal) with an intellectual discipline which he used ever after to rout the spokesmen of orthodoxy, superstition, and all 'useful falsehoods.'" After a few years, these schools were closed and Balzac, when his schooltime came in the early nineteenth century, was sent as usual to the priests.

Stendhal's philosophic weakness was the general weakness of the mechanical materialists. He rejected Kant and the "spiritualist" nonsense of his time, and yet he also felt the emptiness of much of the materialist position, and wrote: "A free government is one which not only does no harm to the citizens, but which on the contrary gives them security and tranquillity. But that is still far from *happiness* . . . he would be a very crude soul who considered himself perfectly happy because he only enjoyed security and tranquillity." He saw the economic inequality of the "free" Englishmen and Americans, but had nothing better to offer.

Balzac evidently felt strongly the currents of philosophical idealism that were challenging the eighteenth century materialists, and, in general, threw in his lot with what seemed to him the advancing side (and this should not be oversimplified by saying he was a royalist). The whole period was one of strong conflicts and contradictions, and there is good evidence that Balzac and Stendhal were actually not so far apart. Stendhal was repelled by the Empire phase of Napoleon, but felt that the Revolution still persisted as a force cleansing Europe of feudalism—he went with the tide as a careerist, but kept his eyes open. Balzac too in his way could see a thing or two, and his worship of Napoleon, whose bust stood in his writing room, cannot have been entirely a blind admiration of the "strong man."

MUCH is revealed about the two men in their reactions to the July Revolution of 1830. Stendhal had felt the revolution in the air. He had either failed, or more likely had refused, to continue as a careerist during the post-Napoleonic period of black clerical and political reaction, and had looked forward to the coming explosion. There is some reason for calling him an "underground resister" during the years after Waterloo, although his code letters and grumblings from Italy were too transparent to fool the contemporary police. On the eve of the revolution of 1830, Stendhal was finishing *The Red and the Black*, and the revolution actually improved its chances of publication. He was giving up reactionary friends, and breakfasting at the Cafe Lemblin, a "haunt of Republicans." He said of himself that he "hated the rabble, yet at the same time most passionately desired their happiness under the name of the



S. Field.

'people.'" On July 28, the crucial day of the revolution, he stayed at home reading Napoleon's *Memorial de Sainte-Helene*, making marginal notes on the progress of the revolt: "(Page 147): Fusillade, platoon firing while I read this page," etc. The next day he went out and observed the rout of the Swiss Guards. And: "I spent the night of July 29 with Mme G. to calm her terror." Later he wrote: "All that the newspapers have reported in praise of the common people is true. . . . Out of one hundred men on the 28 July, only one man was well clad. The lowest canaille was heroic and full of the most noble generosity after the battle."

The uprising was calmed by Lafayette and Stendhal got a consulship at Trieste at twelve thousand francs a year. For a moment his Republican sympathies paid off. But soon the old realities of class alignments returned, Louis Philippe put down "riots" in Paris and Lyons, and the "devout" and "conservative" Guizot became Minister. *The Red and the Black* was now a scandal, and Guizot spoke of Stendhal as "a scoundrel." Stendhal trimmed again, refused to have *The Red and the Black* reprinted, and just managed to save himself a small political job at Civita Vecchia in Italy, nothing comparable to the Trieste job. He decided from then on to write for himself, not for publication. He appealed to the free minds of the future.

Zweig says of Balzac, in the same period: "The revolution of July 1830 had put the middle classes in power again, and there was plenty of scope for forceful young men. A deputy in the French Chamber could rise as swiftly as a twenty-five or thirty-year-old colonel of the Napoleonic era. Balzac almost made up his mind to abandon literature for politics. He flung himself into the *'sphere tempetueuse des passions politiques'* and attempted to secure election for the constituencies of Cambrai and Fougeres. He wanted to stand at the helm—*'vivre la vie du siecle meme'*—and if the electors had been more kind this might have been the path that his ambition would have chosen. He might have become the political leader of France instead of Thiers, or he might even have become a second Napoleon."

SPECULATIONS on what Balzac might have become are of doubtful value, but the fact remains that this son of a Napoleonic peasant-careerist was all ready to jump into the saddle of the bourgeois revolution. The terminology used was "Royalist," "Court," etc., but the aristocracy was finished, and anybody as clear-sighted as Balzac knew it. As a conservative, he would be a bourgeois and against the people. Zulma Carraud, his woman friend of the period, wrote to him not to "soil the reputation you have hitherto earned honestly," and warned him that she herself would remain faithful to her love for "the poor, who are so disgracefully calumniated and exploited by the greed of the rich, for I myself belong to the people. It is true that socially we are included among the aristocracy, but we have always preserved our sympathy for the people, who are suffering from oppression." Balzac pivoted and swung in his sympathies, from noblesse oblige to careerism and back to noblesse oblige. But behind it all was his writer's knowledge of the movement of society, so much admired by Marx and Engels. "It mattered only," Balzac wrote, "that since that time I was able to analyze into its component parts the elements of the compound mass which we call 'the people.' . . . I knew well

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the importance to me of this Faubourg (the Faubourg St. Antoine), this seminary of revolutions . . . hemmed in by misery, subdued by poverty."

It can almost be argued that Balzac's love of the aristocracy was shaded in with his love of the people. He wanted the aristocrats to reassume social leadership and responsibility, and warned them that unless they did, the bourgeois would kick them down the stairs of history. When he showed the vermicelli-manufacturer, Goriot, being tortured and abandoned by his aristocrat-loving daughters, and when he celebrated the perfumer Birotteau's campaign to pay off his business debts, he was saluting a class that was rising to power. He saw both the good and the bad in that rising class, and on the whole, he had a real integrity. He was not deceived in his work, any more than Stendhal. In his heart he perhaps was even less ambiguous. He was not afraid, like Stendhal, to see and smell the "rabble." He honored Zulma Carraud above his other women friends and wrote her: "You are my public. . . . Every time I have seen you I have carried away some gain that has benefited my life."

If what Balzac really got from Zulma Carraud is compared with what he got from Eve de Hanska, that cold, bleak, hypocritical aristocrat who ruined the final years of his life and put him on the rack for her money, it can be seen where his true interests lay. And in some sense he must have hated the very security of money and position for which he spent so much of his life thrashing about.

There is something comprehensive and outgoing in Balzac's genius that is reassuring. In first announcing the scope of his work, he said: "The author has set himself the task of delineating the society and civilization of our epoch which, with its overheated imagination and the predominance of individual egotism, appears to him to be decadent. It will be seen how the author is continually able to mix new colors on his palette . . . how he depicts every stage of the social scale in turn. He introduces us to one figure after another—the peasant, the beggar, the shepherd, the citizen, the cabinet minister, and he will not shrink from limning a portrait of the priest, or even the King himself."

Balzac was one of the first great writers fully to respect the environment, the class and social conditioning of his characters. He rejected and fought "egotism," and showed the murderous and self-murderous results of monomania. He had real women as well as men in his work, and questioned as well as accepted morality. In Balzac's work more than in Stendhal's —and perhaps just because at the time metaphysical thinking was exploring in advance of mechanical materialism—there was a sense of the dialectic of free will and necessity, and free will and human purpose were testing the real limitations of the social and material world.

IN STENDHAL, there was more of the romantic concept of the unique individual, there was more egotism. Each Stendhal hero was the great lover. Every Stendhal hero was Stendhal himself. Instead of a gallery of 3,000 characters, there is Julien Sorel-Stendhal and Lucien Leuwen-Stendhal and Fabrizio-Stendhal. His revolutionist is the individual who can "will powerfully," who can comply and deceive, who can kill. "But what absorbed Stendhal, who, like De Quincey, was a student of 'murder as a fine art,' was the 'intense exaltation' shown by this assassin when he spoke of his crime in court (M. Laffargue, one of the murderers in real life who suggested Julien Sorel to Stendhal)."

Stendhal, Josephson says, "correlated crime with the stirrings of discontent he perceived in the lower classes." This is the same frame of mind as Richard Wright's in writing *Native Son*. It may come from their same feeling of psychologic alienation from the masses which produces an unconscious fear and makes the masses seem to them like killers, to be admired and feared at the same time; repressed, they are to retaliate with terror, blood baths, etc. The fact is that the blood baths have come typically from above, from the suppression of the Commune in 1870 to the mass execution camps of Hitler.

Josephson points out that Stendhal's "mechanistic" position made him believe that whatever was good and worked, whatever gave "happiness," was true. "With utilitarian modifications it (Stendhal's position) was to be revived in the mid-nineteenth century, and again in the twentieth, under the guise of pragmatism." But pragmatism was the stepping-stone to fascism. There is a truth that does not depend on execution chambers or the temporary success of a foreign policy, or even

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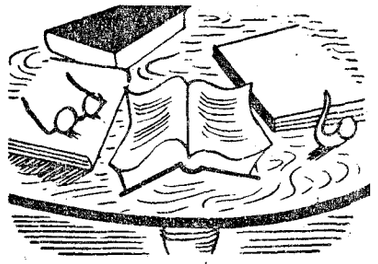

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on giving everybody in Germany full employment. And so admitting all the value of Stendhal's "resistance," and the encouragement he gave to the French resistance under Hitler, the weakness of his position must be faced. Josephson quotes Leon Blum in praise of Julien Sorel: "One seeks in vain to learn what is the crime of Julien Sorel. . . . Throughout his career, at the Renals', in the seminary, in Paris, he acts with perfect probity, ever loyal and without meanness, never betraying a confidence." This saccharine praise is suspect. Josephson points out that "some of the forerunners of modern Machiavellianism (or fascism) have used or abused his (Stendhal's) ideas: these are Count Gobineau, Charles Maurras, of the *Action Francaise*, and Maurice Barres." Andre Gide, who so much admires the "complex" Dostoievski, takes naturally to the "complex" Stendhal. Unqualified admiration for Stendhal has its dangers. And yet if he is estimated with awareness of his limitations, it is impossible not to feel his many values—his rejection of the romantic style, his interest in analysis and self-analysis, his hatred of tyranny, his love of freedom of thought.

On the whole these two biographies, one finished and one unfinished, contribute much to an increased understanding of men who have a tremendous contemporary interest, men who speak from their own times to us in words that will not soon be forgotten.

Return Trip

THE DISCOVERY OF INDIA, *by Jawaharlal Nehru. John Day.* $5.

To THOSE who have watched with admiration and respect the career of Jawaharlal Nehru as a leader of the Indian nationalist movement, his actions and utterances of the past year have come as a profound shock. From the moment of his release from prison, he joined with other leaders of the Congress Party in intensifying the divisions of the nationalist movement by attacks on the Moslem League and the Communist Party. Formerly a leader who took a prominent role in harmonizing the opinions of the various groups within the Congress Party, he has more and more identified himself with the right wing in his maneuvers to secure a favorable award from the British. He even permitted himself to become president of the Congress Party, no longer a coalition of bourgeoisie, peasants and workers, but merely the instrument of the Indian bourgeoisie now ready to come to terms with British imperialism. The man who a few years ago was honorary president of the Indian Trade Union Congress has called trade unions a foreign import unsuited to Indian conditions, and the man who took the lead in spreading the nationalist movement inside the native states has engaged in negotiations with the rulers of these feudal enclaves and advises the people's movement to confine its struggles to limited objectives.

One cannot regard this development in Nehru as anything less than tragic, for it is always tragic when a person of integrity, talent and brilliance begins to compromise the principles upon which his life has been built, especially when the destiny of millions is involved. It is obvious that Nehru's recent actions cannot be explained as a sudden conversion to conservatism or as a change of heart produced by the hope of financial gain. Concealed within the surge of revolutionary activity that has characterized Nehru's life up to now are the germs of the disintegration that has now made itself all too apparent.

As one re-reads Nehru's beautifully written autobiography and pores over the pages of *The Discovery of India* one detects the symptoms of the fatal weakness that has characterized many of the leaders of national movements in colonial countries. To use a short phrase to describe a complex process, one may call it the personalization of politics: the process by which in backward countries a few educated leaders embrace the illusion that because their people are illiterate and ignorant, freedom can only be won *by* the elite *for* the many. Thus the organization of mass movements becomes not so much a method by which the people emancipate themselves, but more a bargaining means that the top leaders may use in winning "concessions" from a cabinet mission. Another result of this illusion is the tendency of top leaders to seek a united front among themselves, even at the expense of issues of vital interest to the people's movement. It is for this reason that questions on the Indian situation run like this: What will Gandhi do? What will Nehru say?—as though the words of individuals would by some magical process produce Indian independence.

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Nehru himself vividly illustrated the form in which this disease has affected him during his much-publicized row with the Maharaja of Kashmir. According to an eyewitness account, when Nehru was stopped at the frontier, "he violently stamped his foot on the floor and told them that one day the Maharaja of Kashmir would have to repent and apologize to him for the discourtesy shown to the President-elect of the Indian National Congress." The personal arrogance betrayed in this incident stands out like a boil.

Thus without in any way belittling Nehru's courageous contribution to the struggle for Indian freedom, it must be frankly stated that he has been unable to transcend his self-confessed will to power or his Brahmin background. His autobiography, brilliant as it is, presents the Indian struggle in the terms of a personal odyssey, and reveals a scarcely-concealed frustration that he had to play second fiddle to Gandhi, who, like a tiny colossus, sat upon his shoulders for so many years. But in *The Discovery of India* the combination of arrogance and personalized politics are more clearly expressed than in any of Nehru's writings. Perhaps the key passage is the following: "A creative minority is always small in numbers, but if it is in tune with the majority, and is always trying to pull the latter up, and make it advance, so that the gap between the two is lessened, a stable and progressive culture results." One searches in vain for any reference to a creative majority.

If this is indeed Nehru's considered view of the relation of the few to the many, not unlike Plato's, then it is not surprising that his treatment of the history of India is astonishingly conventional. It explains why a man who has been influenced by Marxism can write history with a remarkable absence of class analysis. *The Discovery of India* is not, as one might have expected, a history of the Indian people, but a discovery of the ancient great, the luminous minds, the enlightened rulers—like Akbar, with whom Nehru seems to feel a particular kinship. He also lays great stress on India's traditional freedom of thought, but fails to observe that a rigid social structure could permit philosophic speculation only so long as the caste system was untouched.

Nehru quite seriously presents the view that it was this tolerance that enabled India to assimilate her numerous invaders, but fails to note that the invaders, coming from a lower type of social organization, gladly accepted a society more efficient and stable than any they had known. Moreover, Nehru virtually lapses into "race concepts" in explaining India's ability to absorb other ethnic groups. Admittedly Nehru is no scientific historian, but one might have expected him to approach history from the bottom, not from the top.

Nehru's personalization of politics is particularly evident in his treatment of modern India. He spends several pages proving that Jinnah and the leaders of the Moslem League are reactionaries —not a difficult task. He even goes out of his way to record with some pride his talk with the great Moslem poet Iqbal, in which Iqbal tells him he is a patriot while Jinnah is a politician. But the scoring of debating points off Jinnah hardly solves the problem of unity between Moslems and Hindus. Nor does Nehru attempt to explain why the Congress Party has been unable to enlist the support of the Moslem people, or why they increasingly rallied behind Jinnah. It is not much use to call Jinnah names unless the Moslems can be given an alternative that guarantees their right to genuine self-determination. At the same time, Nehru implies that if somehow an agreement had been reached between himself and Jinnah all would have been well, *i.e.*, if the *leaders* can strike a bargain the problem would be solved. It is significant that while Nehru was writing, and later while the Congress and League leadership wrangled at Simla, Moslems and Hindus had developed a working unity in the trade unions, the peasant unions and in the armed forces.

Nehru's description of the Cripps Mission and the Congress policy that resulted is another sample of his succumbing to the notion that freedom can be achieved over the conference table. When the Cripps Mission laid down conditions that the Indian leadership was forced to reject, Nehru, along with his colleagues, seems to have been struck with an attack of what might be called Fabian helplessness. Of India's alternative after Cripps, he says, "What could we do unless some door was open for honorable cooperation?" What were we to do? The question runs like a wail throughout Nehru's defense of the Congress Party's decision to launch a struggle in the midst of an anti-fascist war. Behind this wall lies the assumption that if nothing could be done on

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the top level of negotiation, nothing could be done at all.

But once having adopted the illusion that freedom will be granted over the conference table, and that this is to be entrusted to the wisdom of the "creative minority," one is inevitably led to the position that nothing must be done to upset this well-ordered process. The people's movement must not make demonstrations or organize protests (Nehru joined Congress leaders in condemning the naval mutiny last year). If the people's movement makes "unreasonable" demands, it must be ignored, or if its demands are too urgently put forward, condemned. Thus Nehru comes to share the fantasy now indulged in by the Indian bourgeoisie that they can gain freedom without the support of the people's movement. He has chosen to ally himself with those in India who would sacrifice the Indian people for narrow class interests, and must increasingly depend on reactionary policies to keep themselves in power. Though the opportunity is still open for Nehru to repudiate this alliance, and once more identify himself with the people's movement, nothing he has written in *The Discovery of India* can lead one to believe that this will be his choice. In the struggle to overcome his Brahmin heritage, Nehru has lost.

ARTHUR LEWIS.

MALRAUX'S "MAN'S HOPE"

AFTER outwitting a number of hostile elements, including Franco and the Vichy regime, *Man's Hope*, written, produced and directed by Andre Malraux in Spain in 1938, has finally come to the American screen. This film (at the Fifth Ave. and 55th St. Playhouses) is to *Open City* what an episode is to a novel. Yet within its fragmentary content it reveals the whole character of the Spanish people and the International Brigade that fought with them. Impoverished and dressed in clothes that would draw disdain from the average American worker, its characters are full of hope for the outcome of their battle. They engage the well-heeled enemy with homemade dynamite missiles, a shotgun or two, a handful of rifles and scarcely any bullets; yet armored in their simple dignity, courage and resourcefulness they reveal an incredible strength.

Malraux's camera explores these characteristics with a rare eloquence. The actors are not merely speaking lines. They are people whose words carry life and death for each other. They search each other's faces as they speak, since any one of them can be the weak link that will bring their campaign down in ruins. They trust each other as a sick person trusts the neighbor who brings nourishment, but so much is at stake that each man examines the next as a traveller examines a footbridge over a steep gorge. But in the final sense they have only each other, and it is this knowledge that sparks their behavior in the film. It is this knowledge that makes the Arabian, German and French fliers of the picture go to certain death to stave off the malevolent forces that would beat the people down.

Man's Hope begins and ends with a tribute to the members of the International Brigade. The incidents of the film are based on the need to bring together two groups of anti-Franco fighters to hold some newly-conquered territory. This cannot be accomplished unless a certain bridge is blown up. A small infantry group attempts it, but from the outset the odds are against it. This force, as unmilitary a group as you will ever encounter in any war (one man is seen carrying his coat over his arm), runs and scurries and creeps through the menacing streets that only yesterday were friendly, familiar loitering places. Against the brilliant sunlight, the sharply-edged details of buildings and the debris of city life is heard the constant staccato bark of machinegun and rifle fire. To emphasize the deserted quality of the streets, barren of all life except that supplied by the fighters running from cover to cover, dogs wander about unmolested, sniffing at doorways and garbage cans.

While one attempt is made to blow the bridge by land, it is also planned to bomb it from the air. A peasant volunteers to show the Loyalist aviation the new fascist airfield that must first be destroyed. From the air the terrain looks unfamiliar. He has worked his farm in the area for twenty-two years, but nothing looks the same. He is perhaps the symbol of the changes that the conflict has brought to the countryside. Everything is topsy-turvy. Until he

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finally spots the airfield, his face is a battlefield of charged emotions. Old landmarks no longer count, yet he cannot fail.

Man's Hope was made with a small budget, of course, one that precluded fancy spectacles and elaborate scenes of destruction. To get around this, Malraux uses symbol-images with great effectiveness. In finishing off a scene wherein a car driven by a Loyalist smashes head-on into a gun, he cuts quickly from the smackup to birds in flight. The catapulting human figures, which you never see, become the sharp sensation of sudden movement. Again, in order to get around the actual crack-up of the plane that bombs the bridge, he cuts quickly from a tearing, searing sound to a shot of the sun dying behind the plain.

Yet despite all the fine qualities of the film, it has one serious defect. Nothing in it defines the nature of the enemy, or the spirit that causes the people to fight machineguns with their bare hands. Only a politically literate audience can give reason to such behavior, or to the action of a whole village whose people come down the mountain slopes to pay homage to the dead and wounded international brigade flyers. The villagers, spreading over the paths and slopes like spectators in a gigantic and ruined amphitheater, create a grandeur and human dignity that professional actors and a hundred rehearsals could never capture; yet the film rests almost completely on the movie-goer's ability to supply the explanation. This shortcoming is inexcusable, particularly when there is a perfect spot in the film to correct it. In the Loyalist barracks, one of the leaders asks the men why they fight. One man says he was a pacifist, but has got over it, another that he didn't like Franco because the Moors were helping him, a third that he was bored, etc. It is difficult to understand why Malraux so deliberately avoided the only answers that could have illuminated the reasons for the Spanish people's behavior and their hope. The Malraux of 1938 unquestionably loved and sympathized with the people. It would otherwise have been impossible to present their fight in such moving and poetic terms. It *is* possible that he did not understand completely the issues that surrounded the struggle. Such a lack could easily lead him to his anti-people's position in France today. (See Claude Morgan's "Paris Letter" on page 8.)

JOSEPH FOSTER.

"STREET SCENE"

"STREET SCENE" revives an old question: Why have so few operas been composed in our time? And why do so few, if any, of the handful that have been written, stay in repertory?

One reason, of course, is economic. In the Soviet Union where composers have economic security considerable numbers of operas have been written and produced. But even in the Soviet Union a special factor helps to account for that comparative abundance. It is that the form has proved convenient for quick synthesis of the folk myths and musical traditions of the smaller Soviet peoples realizing nationhood for the first time in modern history. For Soviet Armenia, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and the others opera has served to expedite the maturing of their national cultures. In Russia proper, after an early spurt in operatic production based mainly on revolutionary episodes, there has been a decline in the composition of new operas and the repertory has been reverting to the classics.

Outside the Soviet Union the composition of new operas is so rare that its occurrence is regarded as a phenomenon. The economic hazard is forbidding. The sheer cost of preparing a manuscript for a hearing is prohibitive for most composers and the prospects of a hearing for it are virtually nil. But why the prospects are so nil calls for an explanation in itself. The realism that is ascendant in every field of culture has reached into musical drama. This makes the formal, romantic themes unacceptable while the new realistic content is resistent to the customary formal conventions of traditional opera.

Street Scene, which provides an almost straight operatic setting for the well-known realistic play, attempts to resolve the contradiction. The attempt gives the production excitement and interest, but what it achieves is no more than a distinguished failure. The failure, I feel, was inevitable. I do not rule out the possibility of the emergence of a future musical genius who may succeed in resolving the contradiction. Gluck and Wagner helped to pull opera out of impasses before, though I think the contemporary case is more desperate. And should there be such a resolution of the contradiction in the future I think it will include imaginative elements such as gave the

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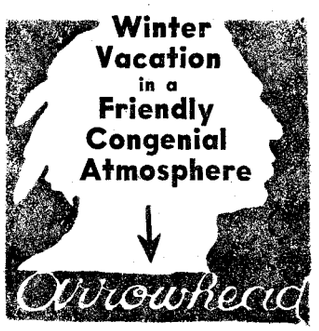

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poetic reason for *The Cradle Will Rock*.

Whatever may come to pass, Kurt Weill in the immediate instance has not resolved the contradiction. For such a realistic theme as tragedy in a slum tenement, for such prosy matters as neighborhood gossip, family quarrels, talk about the weather and so on, the musical declamation and recitative were in the way. The excellent cast, headed by Norman Cordon, Anna Jeffreys, Polyna Stoska, sang it as well as operatic professionals and acted it infinitely better; but the singing remained in the way. It was a relief when the characters dropped back into their natural voices and into ordinary conversation.

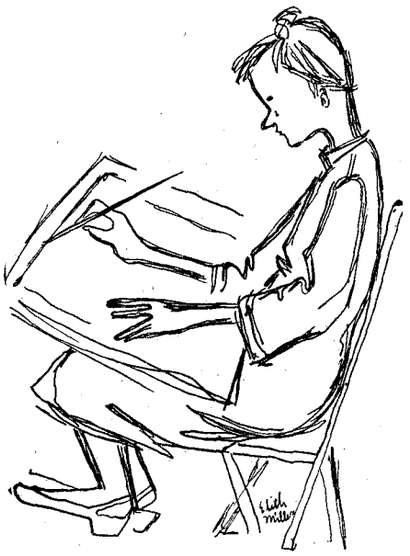
There were some moments when the dramatic tension overrode the sluggish action of the singing. But the most effective passages were the ballet numbers, excellently mediated by Anna Sokolow between choreographic needs and reality. The two passages that stand out in my mind are the ballet of the children at play, with its undercurrent of frenzy, and the dance of the amorous adolescents, done by Sheila Bond and Danny Daniels. Langston Hughes' lyrics were simple and made some social point. And the producers, Dwight Deere Wiman and the Playwrights Company, deserve credit for an honorable attempt.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

ART

A LOT of heat has once again been generated by the abstract art versus realism controversy, this time in the form of an exchange of letters between Marion Summers and Charles Humboldt in the *Daily Worker*. Each time a review covers an exhibit by a painter who embraces clearly one or the other of these principles we are treated to a gentle rain of cobblestones. I am beginning to feel sorry for all those painters at neither extremity. They easily make up the largest category of painters we have. And they include many of the important ones. There are vivid expressionists like Avery and Burliuk, symbolists like Ben-Zion and Tamayo, romantics like Di Martini and Jack Levine—the list could go on indefinitely. They always have to sit it out while the abstract and realist gang swap blows.

People have come to ask "Is Marxism specifically for or against an abstract art?"—"It there a framed formula for a Marxian esthetic?" Speaking for myself I believe there is neither a formula nor a dogma, but there is a direction and a belief. I believe all creative work should move in the direction of the socially purposeful, should move away from chaos to clarity. Where surrealism clings fearfully to the sickly or neo-romanticism



E. Miller.

poses like a wounded animal in a darkened lair I see a concept that fears and despises the society of man. But surrealism has also bequeathed startling images to the creator, has lent eloquence and perception to poets like Lorca and Eluard, not to mention some of the paintings of Chirico and Ernst.

Where abstract art binds itself more and more to a rigid geometric plan, creates a metaphysic of reason beyond reason, there I see a stifling of two of man's most beautiful faculties, intuition and imagination. In the long and arduous task that is painting, however, I have seen a creator turn after several seasons of "formal" exploration to the rich and varied world he lives in for inspiration. (I mentioned such instances as Byron Browne and Holty in an earlier article.) This is just another example of the dialectical law of change and transformation. One must not condemn too quickly. Conversely in the past season Minna Citron and Phil Guston (to mention only two realist painters) changed over to the abstract field, presumably in search of fresh forms which might enrich their content.

The romantic is always caressing one corner of the world or other. He has a large heart. Let us try to develop in him an equally large understanding.

To create a vital social art we must use the language of our day. What better proof is there than Oroszco's murals at the New School and Picasso's "Guernica"? Each age discovers a new imagery. Besides painters like Rouault and Picasso there are such peoples' poets as Carl Sandburg, Mayakovsky and Garcia Lorca.

Do I believe in realism? I think the history of art is, to use Roger Fry's phrase, in large part "the history of the gradual conquest of the world of appearance by the artist." Very often when the artist makes new discoveries in appearances, such as Manet and Cezanne did, he is scorned in his time, only to be used later by the academies as a great interpreter of nature. The concept of realism changes with the social demands and discoveries in each epoch. To reveal the fundamental reality of our day is the challenge facing the modern artist.

All art that is affirmative and alive with the meaningful symbols of our day, art that has a directness and simplicity unfettered by nineteenth century mystic-romanticism or the newer brands of metaphysics, an art that faces the universe with perception and courage and meant for the broadest communication, all such art can help forge a truly social expression.

JOSEPH SOLMAN.

RECORDS

PROKOFIEFF's Fifth Symphony is a major contribution to symphonic literature by a master who has made this form uniquely his own, as Brahms, Tschaikowsky and Sibelius did before him. What he has kept of the symphonic form is its essential quality, its epic scope and exalted emotion. Its dedication "to the spirit of man" is no empty phrase. The musical language is of our time and typical of Prokofieff, its themes succinct, never sweet, but with a strong emotional content and explained in their full implications by the structure of each movement as a whole. It is not music that can be fully grasped in one, or even a few, hearings. It is music, however, so designed —by a master craftsman of sound—as to appear clear and to move simply even on a first hearing, and it is in this respect that Rodzinski's conduct-

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ing does a disservice both to the composer and his audience. His whipped-up climaxes, frequent changes of tempo and exaggerated subsidiary themes in the slow movements, his breakneck speed in the fast ones, make things unnecessarily complicated. It is a pity that a work of this importance should be less than perfectly handled (Columbia M 661).

Toscanini's performance of the Mozart "Jupiter" Symphony, No 41, combines fervor with impeccable clarity of line to make a truly great performance. He discloses in the music the same heroic emotions with which Mozart portrayed his "Don Giovanni," the breaker of conventions. The engineers have given the NBC Symphony unusually full-sounding recording (Victor M 1080). Monteux works an opposite miracle with the Brahms Second Symphony, squeezing out all languor and sentimentality from a work that is often given these qualities, and bringing out Brahms' powerful movement and classic line. The recording is clear but weak in bass (Victor M 1065). Compared to such giants among conductors as Monteux and Toscanini, Beecham sounds mannered, his rhythms over-emphatic, in the Beethoven Fourth. He is never dull, however. The recording is good (Victor M 1081).

Robert Casadesus gives the Second Book of Debussy's Preludes a model performance, a masterpiece of fine and intimate pianism. The music is less melodious than the earlier Preludes, but is more adventurous and musically rich (Columbia M 644). Artur Rubinstein discloses brilliantly in the Chopin B Flat Minor, "Funeral March," Sonata, a more obvious and less intimate style, the technical virtuosity and forthright emotions that have made him so popular a concert pianist (Victor M 1082).

The combination of Mozart, Pinza and Bruno Walter, in "Mozart Operatic Arias," is a happy one. Included in the album are familiar excerpts from *The Marriage of Figaro* and *The Magic Flute*; an interesting concert aria, *Mentre di Lascio* (K 513); a jolly and stunningly-sung aria from *Il Seraglio*, and Pinza portraying not Don Giovanni but his servant Leporello (Columbia M 643). Koussevitsky gives record collectors a bargain in his performance of Mozart's early but exciting E Flat Symphony, K 184, complete on one record (Victor 11-9363).

S. FINKELSTEIN.

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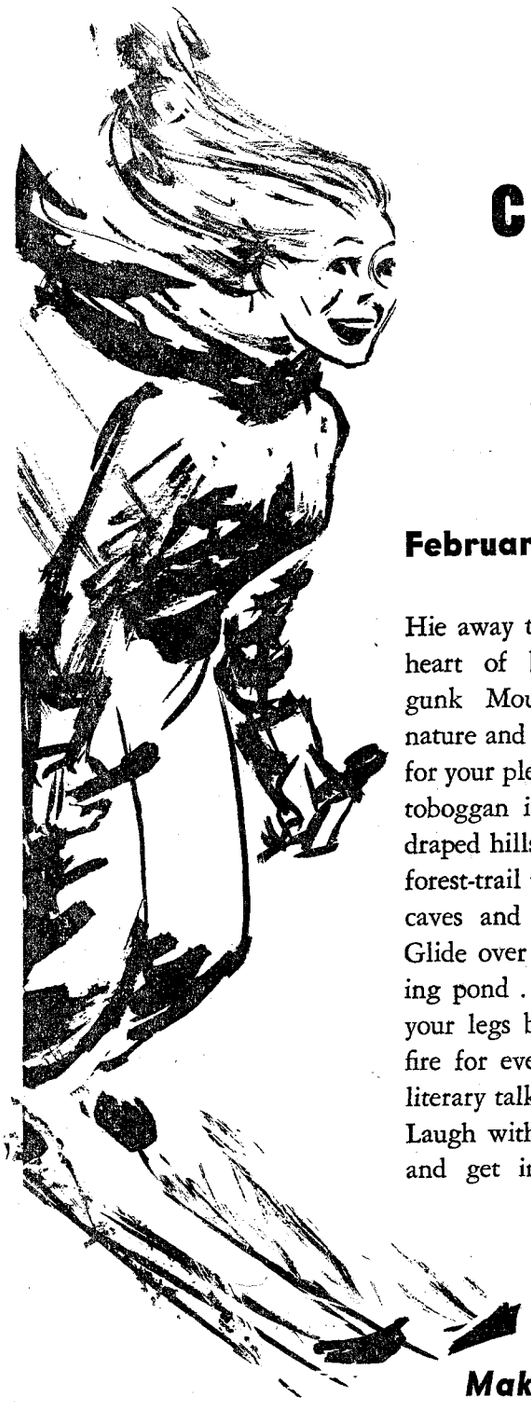

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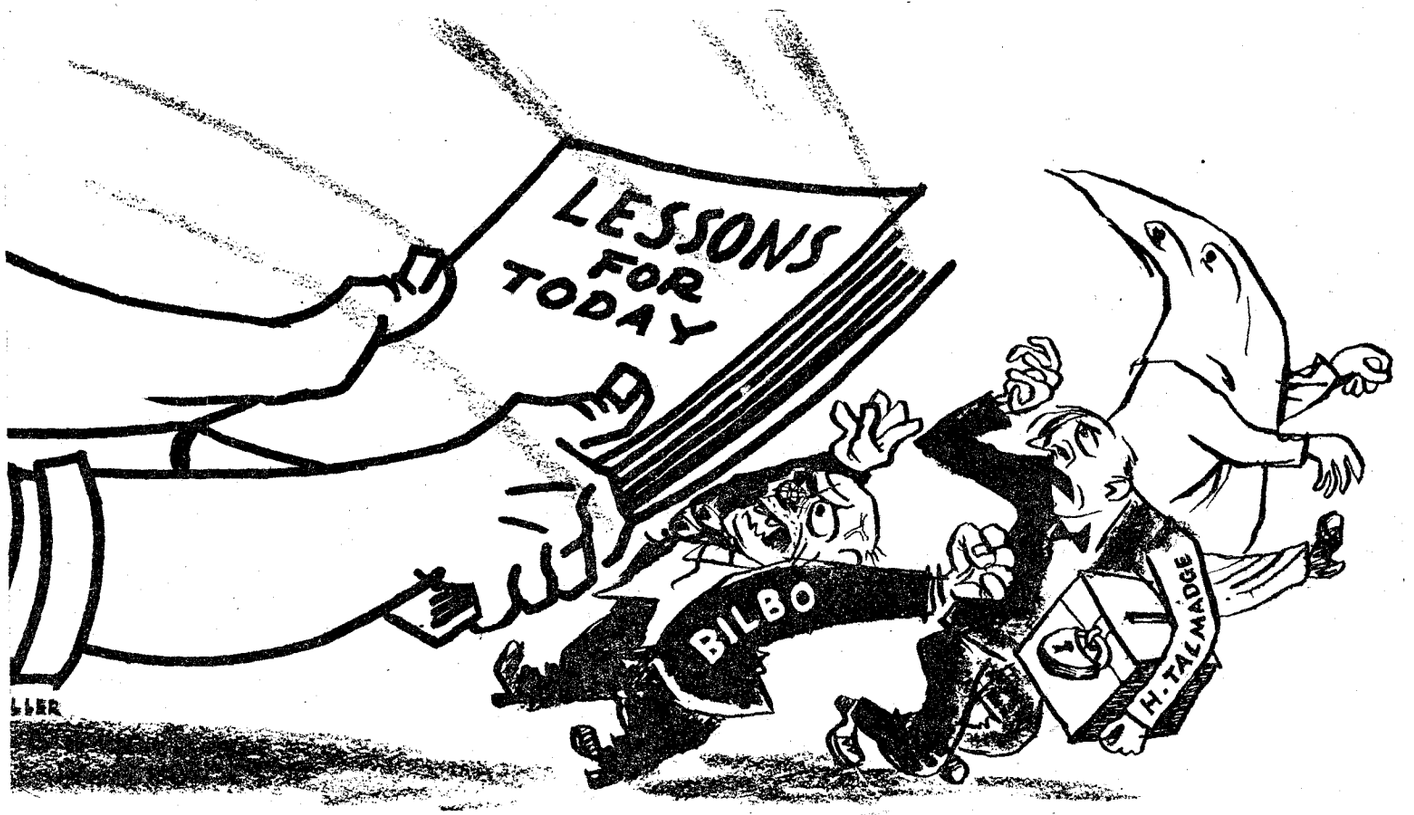

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